IN·CITY·TENTS

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In City Tents

How to Find, Furnish, and Keep a Small Home on Slender Means

By

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IN CITY TENTS

CHAPTER I

CONCERNING GENERAL ECONOMIES

ONCE upon a time—a long-ago time—there was a theory that the householder should pay ten per cent. of his income in rent. Vanished with the snows of yester-year is that estimate. The man who to-day rents a home in a large city feels himself the financier of the century when he expends but one sixth of his income on his rent, swells with justifiable pride if he brings it within one fifth, and considers that he need not reproach himself for extravagance if one fourth of what he earns in the year goes to provide him with a lodging.

To this first cost the man who takes a whole house for his family must add several other

important items. He must think of the question of heating, of the problem of service. Therein the flat-dweller has the advantage over the man who occupies an entire building. To the former the rent means much besides a mere shelter. It includes steam heat for the apartment, the care of hall, stairs, cellar, front steps, and sidewalk, the charge of ashes and garbage, the services of the janitor for small repairs such as the tenant of the whole house does himself or pays for himself. Doubtless he could demand them from his landlord, but it is so much easier and quicker to call in a workman of the neighborhood when there is an unruly lock to be wrestled with, a leak to be looked after, or a loose window-catch to be mended than to write to the landlord for permission to have the work done, that the tenant usually prefers the simpler course.

All these trifles devolve upon the janitor of the flat-house, and if he is a good sort he saves the flat-dweller many a stray dollar in the course of the year. The occasional tips to which he feels himself entitled weigh little against the expense he spares and need hardly be considered in making one's estimate of general economies.

The rent is, of course, the crux in all planning

of expenditures. On other things one may economize, cut down, scrimp. The rent is as incompressible as the Pyramids. Not inadvisedly or lightly should it be assumed, but with a reverence, discretion, and sobriety second only to that bestowed upon the solemnization of matrimony. To be sure, one lease holds longer than the other, but it is almost as easy to secure a divorce as to escape paying one's rent.

Still, as in marriage, it is not worth while to get an article merely because it is inexpensive. The cheap house or apartment always has disadvantages that make it a dear investment. By cheap I do not mean necessarily of a low rent, but one that is low in proportion to one's surroundings. The man and woman who must bring their rent within a fixed sum and that a moderate one should turn their backs upon expensive neighborhoods and resolve to set up their household gods in the very uptown parts of New York or even to cross the East River in their search for a home.

Here is where there is a possibility of an economy that can be felt. The choice of the neighborhood in which one will live is an important matter, but it must be decided as much by one's means

as by one's preference. Naturally, the majority of persons would prefer to reside within easy walking distance of everything—although there are those who desire to be farther from the noise of the business districts. The latter class may be more readily satisfied than the former. For while there are always certain localities where rents are not out of reach, the flats there are usually of the old-fashioned, inconvenient variety, or else are in an unsavory vicinity.

Another economy may be practised if one is willing to climb stairs. With the advent of an elevator prices go up with a bound. The married couple who have good legs and backs may consider them as money in their pockets. The higher the floor the better the air and the light, and, as a rule, the lower the rent. It is in these matters that one must make the decision that means extravagance or veritable economy.

By a comparison of one's positive and probable earnings with the positive and probable expenditures of the year it is possible to arrive at a pretty clear idea of the proportion that may go for rent. This differs in different circumstances. In one family service will cost more, in another, what is known as living expenses, which cover groceries,

meat, milk, ice, and in some cases heating and lighting as well, are disproportionately large. More goes for clothing in some families than in others. In one home, a good deal of hospitality is taken as a matter of course, in another there is hardly a guest from the beginning of the month to the end. This couple depends upon a certain number of entertainments that cost something, that married pair seeks recreation only in the many amusements that cost little or nothing. If there are children in the family, the problem is even more complicated.

All these matters must be weighed in deciding upon the amount to be paid for rent, and individual circumstances must determine the case. Still, the consensus of opinion tends to devoting not more than one fifth or at the outside one fourth of the income to rent, unless the cost of the flat covers enough in heat, light, and service to justify a larger proportion.

This first and chiefest point settled, the other items of living must receive attention. Among these the matter of heat leads the rest. Happy is the man who has simplified the question by taking a steam-heated apartment. Not for him is anxiety concerning the fluctuations of the coal

market and strikes in the coal regions. The furnace is no weight on his mind, nor the open fires and stoves—for there are still flats even in New York that are thus warmed—a burden upon his wife's hands.

Should he have these cares, however, he will do well to bestow a little advance thought upon his coal supply. If he is so fortunate as to have a good place to store it he can save money by laying in his stock in warm weather. Even coal for the range it is worth while to buy in this way. The average kitchen stove will consume a ton of coal in from five to seven weeks—the time depending upon the size of the range and the care of the cook. At this computation one can see that it is a saving of money to buy coal when it is even fifty or seventy-five cents less a ton than it is during the most expensive season.

Nearly as important as the heat is what I have called the living expense. Like Prince Ahmed's magic garment, this may cover very little or a great deal. Which it shall be is decided largely by the skill of the manager of the home. All general economies are grounded upon particular economies. The woman who understands the purchase and care of provisions, who

has studied the science of economy and knows that it is not a synonyme for scrimping or starvation, but spells instead a highly developed sense of proportion, can live well on the money that would furnish but the most meagre provision for the careless or untrained housekeeper.

On this account generalization is more difficult in the matter of living expenses than of house-rent. Granting, however, that from one fourth to one third of the income is spent upon rent, and that this includes heat and the amount of service received by the dweller in any tolerably well appointed flat-house, it is safe to say that one must allow not much less than the same proportion of his income to go for food. Or, to bring the matter to a concrete illustration, the tenant who pays forty dollars a month for rent can hardly hope to cover his bills for meat, groceries, milk, and ice for less than the same amount. He does well—or his wife does—if the total is brought within this limit. And this estimate will hardly hold good for a larger family than the husband and wife and one maid. The food of each additional adult can seldom be counted at less than three dollars and a half a week. This fluctuates, of course, in accordance with the kind of living

provided, but this allowance is for ordinary comfortable subsistence without many "frills" of any sort.

Thus a full half of the income is disposed of. The rest gives little trouble in the spending. When service is included it makes a positive break in the returns, almost if not quite so inevitable as that accomplished by the rent. The amount of the sum, however, like the food expenses, rests to a certain extent within the power of the mistress. Should she be willing and able to train a "green" girl, to do the daintier parts of the housekeeping herself, to rely upon her own head and hands to make up deficiencies, she can at once lower the proportion expended in service. The woman who does all the work of her little home except the washing, ironing, and heavy cleaning reduces the cost of help to a minimum. Trained service she cannot hope to get at less than from sixteen to twenty dollars a month, and the rate of wages for the general housework maid rises steadily as the demand for such service exceeds the supply.

Of the positive household expenses remain now gas, repairs, and replacements.

The last item seems but a trifle in the newly

equipped home and yet it is surprising to find how many wants present themselves even in a freshly furnished family. The art of doing without must be diligently studied and practised before the list of must-haves can be reduced to an inconsiderable fraction. And many things cannot be done without except by an outlay of trouble and patience that amount to more than the cost of conveniences. Labor-saving appliances may coax the money from the pocket, but they as often smooth the wrinkles from the housekeeper's face and spare her a pain in the head or the back or the temper.

Alas that kitchen and dining-room and general household fittings should ever break or wear out! It is these things that cut into the margin that has been allowed for contingencies. The stove-lifter will fall and fracture, the dish towels will wear into holes, the pudding dishes will crack, the tumblers and teacups go into pieces. When luxuries are destroyed the housekeeper may set her teeth and suffer, but never yet has there been found so practical a manager that she could keep house adequately without a stove-lifter or dish towels.

The gas bill is rarely a matter of indifference. But there are some households where its arrival

is awaited as a calamity only to be paralleled by the half-yearly visit to the dentist. These are the homes where cookery is done by gas. For saving though this is when it comes to work, it is not a financial economy. The saving is to be found in the relief from the burden of building fires, of clearing out stoves, of disposing of ashes, in the dust that is spared, in the ease that is given by one's ability to have a hot fire by the scratch of a match and the turn of a key. The woman who cooks by gas should get all the happiness she can from these benefits. She will pay for them all when the gas bill comes in.

Yet who would go back to coal who has once known the cleanliness and comfort of a gas range? For economy means something besides money saving, and the price of the fuel burned in the ordinary stove is the least part of the cost of a coal range. When one estimates the backaches produced by lifting heavy scuttles, by stooping to clean out ashes and clinkers, the smarting eyes and soiled clothing acquired by the same process and by the work of sweeping and dusting the coal involves, the gas bill shrinks in importance.

With the gas stove another sort of economy is

possible. The woman who does her own work can save many a stray nickel by turning off the gas the moment the need for it is at an end. If she can train her maid to do the same so much the better. Until the mistress knows something of the employee's propensities it is well for her to keep the habit of dropping into the kitchen often when the stove is in use and when it is not.

The gas hot-water-back is at once a boon and a bane. A boon, in that it heats the water quickly and makes a bath possible within fifteen minutes from the time the burner beneath it is lighted. A bane, in that it fairly eats up gas. In the modern and best-appointed flat-houses the hot water is connected with the steam-heating apparatus and supplied to the tenants from the cellar, but there are flats a plenty where the only means of heating water in the boiler is by aid of a coal fire or a gas water-back.

There are still expenses that cannot be allowed for, general economies that must be considered. The problem of clothes is too extensive to be undertaken here. But travelling expenses, doctors' bills, dentists' accounts, summer outings, hospitality, Christmas presents, birthday remembrances, such apparent trifles as car-fare, candy

and cigars, stamps and stationery—all the things that "passed in making up the main account" have their place in the daily or weekly outgo.

The best general rule I ever heard given for making an estimate of such expenses was the suggestion that one should enumerate every item one could possibly recall, make a liberal figure on each, add all together, and multiply the sum-total by three. Then, with care, one might hope not to go much in excess of one's allowance.

Discouraging, perhaps, but safe. For the danger is never of overestimating, always of leaving too small a margin. When a sufficiently liberal grant has been made for general economies there is always hope that particular economies may aid to retrieve apparent extravagance.

It is hard for the student of ways and means to avoid diving at once into those particular economies. The subject is fascinating to one who has ever dabbled in it, absorbing to one who has given it long thought. To such an one it is almost as difficult to dissociate the particular from the general as to make a mosaic picture without the innumerable small blocks that compose the work.

Yet one must design the picture before attempt-

ing the adjustment of the parts. The general outlines of the economies of the home must be planned before going into detail. Much depends upon the individual man who begins the home, more upon the individual woman. Housekeeping is probably as easy in New York as anywhere in the world, so far as conveniences are concerned. The best markets are here, nearly the best arrangements for heating and lighting. But for all these one must pay money, and to economize in this one must pay time, thought, labor.

CHAPTER II

PITCHING THE TENT

HOUSE-HUNTING in New York should be classed with the quest of other big game. By virtue of the perils and daring demanded it has a right to such a place. Viewed in this light it should have its charm for landless resolutes. But for the timid it is a nerve-racking and temper-trying experience.

At first the uninitiated do not gauge the perils that lie ahead of them. They think that there is nothing easier than to find an abiding-place in New York. This touching faith they cherish until they have put in one day in house-hunting. If they are exceptional optimists they may even cling to their convictions for forty-eight hours. The end of that time finds them faint, although still of necessity pursuing. When they finally, after a period of search that varies from three to thirty days, decide upon a dwelling which differs

absolutely from their mental concept of their home, they are in a state to vow that they will move again upon no man's persuasion.

For there are many things to debate in finding a home. The question of price must often be the chief consideration and determine the location. The man's place of business and his convenience in reaching it also have weight at first, although it does not take long for the house-hunters to attain the point where a habitable home is the only *sine qua non* and the means of getting there a matter of comparative insignificance.

Yet this is one of the most important considerations in deciding where one is to live. The mood of absolute weariness to which a few dozen flights of stairs and a nice selection of janitors will reduce the average man and woman should not so blind them to the future as to render them careless as to the vicinity of "L" stations or to the stopping-places of future subway trains. In any case enough is taken out of a man by the necessity of travelling back and forth to and from business every day without making it worse for him than is necessary.

There can be no doubt that the long journeys up and down town made inevitable by the

conformation of Manhattan Island have an effect upon the nerves of New York citizens. The rush for trains, the mad scurry up and down the steps, the clinging to a strap as trains or trolleys swing around curves or jolt to a stop, do their share in sending a man to business jaded before his regular work is begun, or put the final touch to the weariness with which he returns home after his day's toil. Since the trip back and forth cannot be escaped, its trials should at least be minimized as far as possible. Yet, as every business man cannot live within a minute and a half of a rapid transit station, those who are more remote may console themselves by the thought that a brisk walk morning and evening is good for the health. They may also take comfort in the reflection that even comparative remoteness from such a station has its effect in lowering rents.

So many considerations besides expense have weight in the choice of a home that it is a matter upon which one hesitates to generalize. The old New Yorker who has a prejudice in favor of surroundings with associations clings fondly to regions below Twenty-third Street, and even below Fourteenth. He seeks for a local habitation in old Greenwich village, with its queer little streets

running in an eccentric fashion that recalls cow-path days. He adores Washington Square, its arch and its cross-crowned tower, and would rather have limited quarters there than a spacious suite miles uptown. Or his affections are bound to Second Avenue, with its Knickerbocker memories, and he craves a home near St. Mark's, or in Irving Place or Stuyvesant Square. Verily, he has his reward. If he is a good pedestrian he can probably walk to or from his office, he is within easy distance of nearly everything,—except the Park,—and feels himself encompassed with an atmosphere of old-time respectability.

Which is also strongly flavored with inconvenience. For in these parts of town the new and up-to-date flat is chiefly conspicuous by its absence, and the apartments are usually to be found in old dwellings that have been made over. Elevators are not, the ceilings are of the pitch of former days, which means difficulty in heating the rooms adequately in cold weather, and long climbing to reach the flats on the upper floors. The few new apartment houses are stately buildings with prices whose mere mention gives a nervous shock to the house-hunter of moderate means.

For the uptown districts there is much, very much, to be said. The downtown devotee will claim that in summer it is cooler below Fourteenth Street than uptown, because of the sea breeze that sweeps across this part of the island. But when one gets well up into the Eighties and Nineties and beyond, the spaces are wider, the air has more room to circulate, and is undoubtedly purer and better than that to be found in the more crowded quarters downtown. The nearness of the Park is a blessing, and Riverside Drive is a boon to those who can reach it easily. There are trees on the uptown streets, and in summer there is an air of rural outdoors that deludes one into forgetting that one is in the midst of a great city. For those who will have the courage to go beyond One Hundred and Twenty-Fifth Street in their house-hunting and become extra-Harlemites, a veritable flavor of rusticity is in store.

Such delights as these does the much-pitied and jeered-at Brooklynite know. He does not think himself an object of compassion. Not he! Or if he does, he will not own to it—while he lives in Brooklyn. He insists that it is as easy to cross the Bridge or the ferries at rush hours as

to ride uptown on an "L" train or a surface trolley. It must be confessed that he has a good deal on his side. Moreover, the promise of the bridges to come opens a vista of improved accommodations for passengers that encourages the Brooklynite to lift up his head and rejoice in the thought that the day of his deliverance draweth nigh. Decidedly, the young couple seeking a modest home might do far worse than go to Brooklyn.

One point cannot be too carefully guarded by the house-hunter. The stranger in New York is likely to get into trouble about localities unless he is guided by some sophisticated friend. In Manhattan, especially, certain streets or certain parts of streets are most undesirable. One may find a cross-street that is all it should be for a part of its length and in a single block east or west may stumble upon a neighborhood that is positively disreputable. Of such conditions the recently made New Yorker can know nothing and he must either seek the advice of a better-informed friend or rely upon his house agent.

The probability that the home-seeker will be in a measure dependent upon such an agent makes it most necessary to choose carefully the

firm from whom one rents an apartment. There are reputable house agencies, but there is an abundance of the other sort as well and the Innocents Abroad are quite as likely to fall into the hands of the latter as of the former.

Nuisances of various sorts must be watched for in choosing a home. I have known of one apartment in an excellent street where the tenants' nights were made horrible by a bowling alley in the block back of them and a social club in the next house but one. The vicinity of a music school is a drawback and also that of certain other kinds of business. It is wise, too, to learn if any of the tenants of the house are addicted to trombones, violins, singing lessons, or family feuds. One is hardly less noisy than the other.

The janitor is a problem of infinite possibilities. In his person are centred the joys or the griefs of the tenants. When it can be done the house-hunter should learn whether this being is more or less than man. The full attention his character demands must be reserved for another chapter.

All is by no means done when the points mentioned have been satisfactorily settled. Then comes the awful process of suiting oneself with the inner part of the home. Immediately begins

a disillusionment that is enough to shake permanently the youngest and most confiding married couple's faith in house agents and advertisements.

Unless the house-hunters have already served an apprenticeship in flats they begin by believing all that is told them. They think that "all light sunny rooms" means rooms into which the sun pours at least part of the day. They fancy that "steam heat" signifies that every chamber is warmed. They even think that a room *is* a room. It does not occur to them that it is probably only a medium-sized closet.

Of these fond impressions they are soon disabused. By the time they have been introduced to a few "all light rooms" in which one can barely see one's hand before one's face at high noon, have seen the "steam heat throughout" epitomized in one small radiator in the front hall, one in the drawing-room, and a pipe in the bath-room, have learned that a dark cubby six by nine is ranked as a commodious chamber, and have had it impressed upon them that ventilation is an unknown art in the ordinary New York flat they are madder and wiser persons.

Having acquired this amount of knowledge they would do well to go home and digest it. If

they will, at this stage, put in a brief and profitable period in adjusting themselves to circumstances, they can resume their quest without the feeling that they are hunting the impossible.

A few announcements must be made in the first place. New Yorkers of small means must, as a rule, reconcile themselves to having rooms to match the means. Not for them are spacious drawing-rooms and broad, airy chambers. They must console themselves with the thought that there are other things to make up for crowded quarters, for these last they are bound to have.

To one or two dark rooms, too, they must yield, unless they are willing to mount stairs. "There is always room at the top," may be taken as the New York flat-dwellers' motto,—room for light, air, and, it may be added, quiet. Not until one has had a succession of noisy neighbors overhead does one appreciate to the full the advantages of the top flat.

Of course, the top flat is not for all. Luckily for those who want it, there are families who abhor stairs, and who, to escape them, are willing to have one or two poorly lighted rooms. The man or woman who is out of the house all day does not object to a twilight bedroom. The man's

"den," which is used only in the evening, need not be brilliant in the daytime. But into the principal living rooms of the house, the sun should fall for a while each day.

The north side of the street is often advocated as superior to the south because in the former the sun falls on the front windows. But if the sleeping rooms are at the back the south side of the street is really preferable. For the sunshine is more needed in a sleeping room than in a drawing-room, and the south breeze that comes up in the summer evenings to cool the fervid city often means a night's sleep to those whose chambers open towards the south.

Convenience may be—often must be—dispensed with to some extent in a flat. In the average city apartment one cannot look for a butler's pantry, a downstairs laundry and drying-room, or for spacious closets. But sanitary plumbing must be insisted upon. A dark bathroom or one that is inadequately ventilated is worse than a dark kitchen—and that is bad enough. No new tenant should go into a house without being satisfied that the plumbing is in perfect order. Fresh paint in bathroom and kitchen should be demanded. Diligent investigation must make

sure that the house is not infested to an undue degree with mice, roaches, water-bugs, or worse vermin. Sometimes the discovery of these is only made too late, but the tenants should never have to reproach themselves with neglect of precautions.

So far as steam heat is concerned, taking a flat is more or less like buying a pig in a poke. Not until one has lived in a flat and learned the caprices of the janitor and through him of the heating apparatus, can anything positive be said as to whether freezing or baking will be the ordeal of the winter. But, at least, let no one be misled into believing that one radiator in the front passage will warm the bedrooms at the other end of the flat. This fond delusion is responsible for many cold-impaired physiques and profanity-imperilled souls.

In an ideal state of flat society one would offer cautions about closets. In this respect one has to put up with what one can get. Some new flats possess closets, clothes-presses with deep drawers, and a refrigerator built in. In a few one may even find sideboards, hat-racks, and dressers, and the tenants in these dwellings may call themselves and the builders blessed. Such con-

veniences justify the owners of the flats in calling for a higher rent, since they save the tenants the purchase of certain necessary pieces of furniture and spare labor and expense in case of a flitting.

CHAPTER III

HOW TO BE HAPPY WITH THE JANITOR

IN the first place, it is unwise to begin a career in a flat by rubbing the janitor the wrong way. He likewise is a vertebrate animal, although many persons seem to fail to recognize this as a fact. He even has "feelings,"— not merely physical sensations, but real feelings in that part of his anatomy which he would probably call his heart. Wherever they may be, it is quite possible to hurt them or to wound his vanity, and then trouble begins.

Being but human, the janitor likes to have his brief authority recognized. It is not much of an authority, but since it is all he has, it means a good deal to him. He does not like to be ordered about as if he were a porter or a caretaker or any other ordinary member of society. He is a janitor! Another illustration, by the way, of the danger of putting great power into the hand of a

single man. Upon him depend the health and happiness of every one in the house. Small wonder if the knowledge tends to make him arrogant.

The sensible man and woman do not fight with immutable conditions. Instead, they accommodate themselves to circumstances. In a flat the janitor is the principal circumstance.

So, when the new tenants enter an apartment house they must not make the fatal mistake of thinking that the mere fact of paying rent has given them any inalienable rights. Instead of this, let them lead off by making a friend of the janitor.

Not a friend perhaps in the accepted sense of the word. Even yet flat etiquette does not demand that the janitor shall be invited to dinner or shall be on calling terms, except so far as business is concerned. But the tenants should at all events be in friendly relations with him.

In the first place it is well to achieve a small exchange of coin of the republic. Never yet lived the janitor who would not accept even a modest tip. If he gets it early in the action, that most potent form of gratitude, which has been defined as a lively sense of favors to come, will

move him to exertions he would never put forth in behalf of the non-tipper.

This is one of the places where high principles on tipping are more honored in the breach than in the observance. I have known strenuous souls who took moral grounds about tipping succeed in hopelessly antagonizing the janitor and in condemning themselves to a life of misery by too strict adherence to convictions. The tip, when it passes between the tenant and the janitor, blesses him that gives more than him that takes.

But tips alone are not enough. There should be a due amount of courtesy shown to the custodian of sweetness and light for the premises. Such courtesy might perhaps seem to be taken for granted when the tenant is of gentle birth and breeding, but it is not always in evidence. The janitor recognizes its possessor, when he meets him or her.

One woman of my acquaintance, who is socially pleasant to know, has nothing but hard words for her janitor. It is not because she is stingy in the matter of tips. She pays generously for extra service and remembers the janitor at Christmas. But her orders are always given as orders, never presented as requests. If things do not go the

right way she scolds. The janitor resents it and takes out his resentment in the fashion that first suggests itself to him, by surly words and delayed obedience. To her he is the epitome of surliness, even for a janitor. Other tenants in the house find him good-natured, obliging, and civil. It all depends upon how one takes him.

Another mode of displaying consideration to the janitor is by recognizing his hours. In every apartment house there are fixed times for certain operations, such as sending down ashes and garbage, sending up coal and the like. The majority of tenants fall in with these times and seasons. But there are others who are either thoughtless or selfish, and take the ground that the janitor is there to serve the inmates of the house. For him they have no feeling beyond that which they would show to a machine. They make demands upon him out of hours, expect him to be at their call during the period in which he has a right to leisure, and too often give their orders for work out of time in a manner calculated to rouse ire in the breast of Moses or of Job.

Such persons as these should forswear flats and go to Brooklyn and live in a whole house. They are fitted for the segregated life.

After one has reached the point of polish where one tips the janitor when occasion requires it, speaks to him civilly, and makes no unreasonable demands upon him, there would seem to be little left to do. The chief part of the remaining code of manners is, indeed, negative rather than positive.

First, do not let yourself drift into too easy terms with him.

Possibly this seems a contradiction of what has gone before, but it is not. Kindness is feasible without familiarity. The janitor will respect far more the tenant who knows the place of both than the one who lets courtesy slip into obliteration of the distance between them.

It is the self-respecting servant who does not misunderstand friendliness. So it is with the janitor. But when the tenant falls into a hail-fellow-well-met style of speech and action he has no one to blame but himself if he has trouble from over-freedom.

This is one of the reasons why children of the household should not be allowed the range of the janitor's quarters. There are plenty of apartment houses in which the boys and girls of the tenants are in and out of the janitor's rooms

whenever it suits the youngsters. This should never be permitted.

It ought to go without saying that no tenant should ever allow the janitor to gossip to him or to her about any other tenant, but the admonition is not unneeded. In such a case it is well to bear in mind the old saying that a dog who will fetch a bone will carry one. The gossip that the janitor retails to a tenant will be exchanged for gossip about him at the first opportunity.

It is doubtless true that familiarity does not breed contempt except about contemptible things or in contemptible people—but there are so many little streaks of contemptible tendency in the best of us that it is a risk to invite familiarity until we are sure of the party of the second part.

So much depends upon the friendliness of the janitor that it is a great blunder to imperil pleasant relations by any means that may be avoided. The kindly word, the expression of sympathy when bad weather or any accident means extra work, the appreciation of service well performed, the thanks—and remuneration—for any uncovenanted mercy, the interest in his health—an interest shown by a friendly phrase or office in time of need—all are not mere truckling to the

arrogance of a hireling. They are simply Christian courtesy. We would any of us show it quickly enough to the country neighbor who served us in any capacity. The canon of neighborliness is not suspended or nullified by a change of scene. The Jews may still have no dealings with the Samaritans, but even yet the man to whom one can be of service is a neighbor—even though he be also a janitor.

CHAPTER IV

DECORATING THE HOUSE

THE decoration of the ordinary flat is a fearsome sight. The smaller the room, the larger the pattern of the wall covering, is the principle that apparently guides the paper-hanger. Another favorite theory—and practice—with him is that a dark room should have a dark paper.

When the alleged decorator sticks to papers it is bad enough, but he does not show his full powers until he is turned loose to work his fell designs with a fresco brush. Then are astonishing combinations secured. Improbably azure skies by which those of sunny Italy would show faded and sere, impossible vines and flowers and fruits, birds of unknown species, apoplectic and hydrocephalous cherubs are all part of his stock in trade and he puts each and all where they will do most harm.

I have known persons who had been rendered so paretic by much house-hunting as to take a flat because everything else suited them, bar the decorations. And a bar sinister these proved before they were done with them. One shrinks from surmising what may be the eventual effect upon minds that are daily and hourly submitted to such outrages upon art and decency as the so-called decorations of the ordinary cheap flat. Happy is that couple who takes an apartment so new that it has not yet been decorated or so shabby that it must be redecorated. Then the incoming tenant may have a chance to impart to his quarters the individuality that does so much to convert a dreary lodging into a home.

Decision upon the papers that shall be used for the chief living rooms of a dwelling requires a great deal of consideration. The quality that governed Mrs. Primrose in her choice of a wedding gown is of chief importance. And when one is searching for a paper that will wear one is not of necessity looking for one of durable material. Rather is it one that will wear well in that those who have to live with it will not soon weary of it. Also, since there are few minor plagues that are more bother than repapering,—

with all that that means of work and discomfort, — the paper should be one that will not fade.

Since the ordinary flat rooms are small, the walls should be hung with paper in a solid color or of a small and inconspicuous design. Such uniformity is of advantage as furnishing a better background for pictures than any hanging of conspicuous figure. A cartridge or flock paper is almost invariably satisfactory, provided it is chosen in the right tint.

What this tint must be is determined by various considerations. If the room is very light, a deeper shade may be used than is desirable for an apartment with few windows, or with those that look against a near wall. Striking colors are to be avoided. The persons who have a large house with several living rooms may perhaps safely choose red for one of these. When one apartment must be drawing-room, library, and sitting-room, red is too trying for a wall hanging. For it is not a restful color. Without going into the fine-drawn distinctions of those who endow tints with moral effects and insist that red in a room promotes rage, pink tends to immorality, and blue makes for righteousness of life, one may yet

know that some hues are less restful to live with than some others.

A further consideration that sways one in the choice of a color in wall decoration is the furniture. Should one already have sofas and chairs upholstered, the selection of the wall paper must be influenced by the desire for harmony with these. Even if one has the selection of upholstery still ahead it is wise to bear in mind that some tints are hard to match and that the woman who puts a bizarre color on the walls is laying up trouble for herself when she comes to buying carpets, hangings, and furniture coverings.

For a room that is tolerably well lighted, green is an excellent paper. No shade is more restful to the eyes and through them to the spirit. Moreover, it furnishes well and harmonizes with many good designs in rugs or carpets, curtains, and upholstery. It is an admirable background for pictures. The shades of green are many, and since a paper always looks lighter when hung than in the sample, too delicate a shade should not be chosen. On the other hand, too deep a green absorbs the light and makes a room seem darker than it really is.

Next perhaps in merit to green is a soft terra-

cotta, although this opens the way for difficulties in upholstering. The material for curtains or chair coverings that is actually of a light terra-cotta is rather delicate for constant use and it is not always feasible to find darker shades that will contrast well with the paper.

For a quite dark room a yellow paper may, if wisely chosen, give an effect of sunlight to the apartment. But it must be just the right tint, more a buff than a real yellow. As the shade deepens it often takes on a bilious tinge or a mustard-like complexion. With a yellow paper the hangings need not match. Contrast rather is to be sought and while sash curtains may be white, the other draperies, the rugs, and the furniture may shade up from the yellow of the paper through golden brown to a deep chestnut. In such a room, the woodwork, if painted, may be white.

Lucky is the woman who takes a home with hardwood finishings. Not only is she spared the choice of the paint, the decision as to what may go into this room and what may not go into that, but she is saved the constant anguish of scrubbing light paint, or of polishing dark, and the annual agony of repainting.

Having chosen her drawing-room paper she is a wise woman who has the rooms opening from it hung with the same color. A variety of papers in connecting apartments has a patchwork effect and one is conscious of a slight mental shock in passing from one room to another.

A little more license may be allowed in the papers on the walls of the chambers. There are plenty of flowered designs, pretty "bedroomy" papers, that are excellent here. Even with these, small figures should be sought and nothing aggressively geometrical chosen to torture the eyes and the mind in illness. Always a bedroom paper should be light and cheerful in effect.

The hall paper is a problem. The long tunnel-like corridors of the ordinary flat seem to demand a light paper, but the hanging on this wall is more likely to be soiled than any other in the house. The constant going and coming, the brushing of dusty clothes, the contact with trunks or furniture that must be carried through the hall, all combine to make it desirable to have a dark, well-covered paper, rather than the light, solid tint to which one inclines. Yet the majority of papers sold for halls are nightmares of ugliness. If one can get a tolerably light ground,

with a small, unobjectionable figure in a darker color, it seems the wisest choice.

The bathroom is better painted than papered. Best of all is tiling and this is found in some of the new flats, but it is discouragingly uncommon in those for which rents are low. The paper which imitates tiles is neat but it is not always serviceable. A paint that can be wiped off with a wet cloth when spotted or streaked or splashed by the soap and water of the strenuous bather, is preferable to anything more perishable.

So, too, should the kitchen be painted. There is no talk of papering this, but it is frequently kalsomined. Then when a spot comes, it has come to stay. If it is scrubbed off in a wild struggle after cleanliness, the latter end of that spot is worse than the first. The dirt may have gone but the surface of the plaster has gone with it and the blotch that is left is an ugly reminder of the early offence.

For the maid's room in a flat a painted is better than a papered wall. Could the householders be sure of the same tidy maid through all their occupancy of the flat, a paper on the wall might answer. But when there is a succession of servants of varying degrees of cleanliness,

there are obvious objections to paper. The painted walls can be scoured when soiled, and afford little refuge for vermin of any sort. The paint may be fresh and light in color and if well chosen will prove quite as attractive in appearance as the cheap papers commonly used in the smaller rooms of a flat.

CHAPTER V

FLOOR COVERINGS AND HANGINGS

THERE are certain persons who cherish the fancy that it is unmixed fun to furnish. Generally they may be divided into two classes, —those who have had no experience and those who have plenty of money.

Could such an ideal state exist as plenty of money and no accumulated furniture there might be a tolerable amount of excited enjoyment in purchasing the plenishing of one's home. But almost always the young couple who go to housekeeping is afflicted with a stock of gifts in the housefurnishing line. Not all may be so favored as the popular travelling salesman whose wife could point with pride to seven brass and onyx tables among her wedding presents, but nearly all the newly married have trials of their own. Odd chairs, eccentric tea-tables, fancy stands,

gorgeous lamps, striking pictures, are often among the least of their troubles.

A trying feature of the situation is that each of the gifts may be admirable in its own way but at the same time show the individuality of the person who presented it to an extent that makes the room in which all appear bear the aspect of a freak collection. Such a room can in no way indicate — as the rightly appointed room should — the character of the person who dwells in it.

In spite of such handicaps it should still be the effort of the home-maker to produce a harmonious whole. Should she possess pieces of furniture that command attention, she should tone them down by others that will consent to be subordinated. She is happy if she can banish to other parts of the house the objects that war together and by scattering them through the different rooms achieve a measure of peace in each chamber.

For harmony is the object chiefly to be sought by the furnisher. This harmony does not consist merely in the choice of colors that blend and shapes that sympathize but also in the fitness of each piece to every other with which it comes into association. As for example, in a room where the furniture is chiefly of wicker or is simply

upholstered, hangings of satin or of rich brocade are not in keeping. It matters not if their colors accord with the tints in which the room is furnished. Such hangings put the rest of the furniture out of countenance. A superbly carved and ornamented console, a heavily gilt and richly upholstered chair or couch casts into the shade the plainer furniture that would be entirely satisfactory, lacking the neighborhood of its showy companion.

Furniture, carpets, hangings, should never be bought without consideration of where each article is to go and what are to be its associates. This consideration is especially necessary when the purchase is likely to have a long period of service. It is always wise to draw up in the beginning a list of what is needed and then to look more than once before buying. The mistake young householders are most prone to make is that of buying this or that because it suits their taste or tickles their fancy without being sure how well this one piece will go with its prospective surroundings.

The first attention is bestowed upon the floor coverings. Here is a problem that demands the more thought because there are so few cheap carpets

that are worth the buying. The tapestry Brussels looks cheap from the start and grows shabby after brief wear. The solid ingrain filling is pleasing to the eye, if chosen in the right tint, but from the first shows every spot or footprint. Its wearing powers differ. Sometimes it lasts well, again, it breaks readily. Matting is clean and inexpensive, but if exposed to hard wear goes to pieces in a short time unless well protected with rugs.

The ideal arrangement, in certain ways, is a bare hardwood or stained floor on which rugs may be laid. One finds such floors more and more in new apartments. They have much to commend them. Far more sanitary, in that they do not encourage the accumulation of dust or dirt in corners from which it cannot be easily dislodged, they are also more economical in the first instance in that they do not demand fitted carpets that cannot be again used without remaking. Few floors cannot be painted or stained, and although the polished floors are handsomer, the others make a fair substitute. The drawback to the bare floor is that it shows dust promptly and must have regular dusting and wiping. Such a floor may be kept clean by a bi-weekly application of crude oil, and if never washed, but only

wiped off with a dry or an oily cloth, it will keep in good condition for a long time. Whether the floor is polished or painted the treatment should be the same and the oil should always be applied with reserve. Too liberal a coating makes the floor sticky and produces an unpleasant reminiscence of a paint shop.

On a bare floor in the drawing-room one large or several small rugs may be laid. To those who cannot afford the genuine Oriental rugs and are yet not severely stinted in their expenditure, the Wilton rugs made in the Oriental patterns are very satisfactory. They are not cheap, but they wear well and are excellent in coloring and design. One large rug of this sort, covering most of the drawing-room floor, does away with the necessity for smaller rugs and is more satisfactory than several of these.

When hardwood or painted floors are out of the question a Wilton filling in a solid color is pleasing and durable. This, however, shows spots until after the first nap is worn off. It costs a good deal, but if the price can be afforded the wear it gives justifies the expense. When possible, small rugs should be laid on the parts most subject to tracking.

Many householders cannot compass Wilton, however, and if they have a number of small rugs to save the worst wear to the under carpet, they can do fairly well with the plain ingrain filling, or even with a good matting for the drawing-room. Here there will not be the hard usage a floor covering must receive in a hall or dining-room. For the floor of either of these one of the best coverings within the scope of persons of small means is found in the grass matting. This comes in several shades and widths and is inoffensive and even pleasing to the eye. It is cheap in the best sense of the word, for the first cost is slight and it wears remarkably well. A square rug of this in a dining-room will stand even the constant friction of feet and chairs for a long while without showing a break.

This matting is less satisfactory for bedrooms because it is rough and harsh to the bare foot. Ingrain carpet, in plain colors or in small neat designs, or felt, most grateful to the naked feet, or matting, may be used here. The latter should be supplemented by rugs before the bed, bureau, and washstand. For those of economical tendencies that is a happy fancy which has brought into vogue again the old-fashioned rag carpets.

These, of course, are made of scraps of dress materials, but there are establishments where old carpets can be cut into strips and woven over again into durable and pretty rugs. These are excellent for use in the bedroom.

For the kitchen floor nothing is better than linoleum. To this fabric applies strongly the saying that the best is the cheapest. Linoleum is not low priced when one gets a good quality but this wears enough better than the cheaper variety to make the difference in cost worth while.

When it comes to hangings it is difficult to lay down any rule with decision. Individual tastes have as much to say as individual purses, and the variety from which one may choose is bewildering. The one immutable principle, however, must still be consistency.

The day has gone by when to have pretty draperies one must have large means. Countless artistic stuffs of durable texture and delightful design come now at low prices. Material for portières, for heavy draperies, are made in cotton, wool, silk, and mixed textiles, of tints and prices to suit every preference and nearly every pocket. While when it comes to the thinner fabrics that are sold for sash curtains or for bed-

room draperies the choice is easy. Hardly a fortnight passes that one does not see in the daily papers advertisements of curtains of all sorts of wash fabrics. Sometimes these are "good values,"—to use the trade term,—sometimes they are not. The made-up curtains should always be carefully examined, lest they should have been so negligently put together that they will come to pieces at the first wash. The beruffled curtains that are found at these sales answer for chambers, but they have a "bedroomy" look that renders them undesirable for sash curtains in a city drawing-room. For the latter purpose it is better to buy net or "Swiss," dotted or figured, by the yard and make the curtains for the windows lacking them. The straight unfrilled curtains are more readily done up than those decked with ruffles and look better after laundrying than those fashioned more elaborately.

The choice of curtains for the living rooms is largely decided by the exposure and light. Colored curtains, even of the best quality, will often fade beneath the direct glare of the sun. When a colored curtain is chosen for a sunny window there should be a sash curtain of a fairly

opaque texture that will break the direct rays. The shades should also be drawn when the sun falls full upon the windows.

Such precautions do not have to be observed when the curtains are white. In this color — or lack of color — there may be found many stuffs besides the ordinary lace or net curtains. White or cream-colored or écru "yachting cloth," "lattice cloth," and similar fabrics abound, and for an inexpensive and satisfactory white curtain nothing is much better than a firm white Madras. This wears well and may be washed again and again. It needs neither starching nor ironing, since it looks best when it falls in soft, unpolished folds.

With long inner curtains, whether white or tinted, sash curtains are desirable, although they are less obligatory with the former than with the latter. In any case they add much to the appearance of the room, and their cheapness brings them within the reach of most purchasers.

So much for window curtains. Portières are in one way a simpler matter and yet they usually cost more. Light fabrics are not in place in a doorway. Something heavy enough to hang in good folds must be selected. This need not be

of the same stuff as the upholstery of the furniture, as was the idea once upon a time. The color is the chief point to be considered here—color and a fabric that will harmonize with the furniture coverings and neither throw them into the shade by richness, or shame them by cheapness and flimsiness.

In purchasing portières it must be borne in mind that it makes a sensible difference in the price if they have to be lined. There are stuffs a-plenty that do not require lining and if these can be found in suitable color and material it is a wise economy to get them. Also, it is a saving of work if not of money if the curtains that come ready-made can serve one's purpose. There are many of these and they are a noticeable economy of labor. The measuring, cutting off, and hemming of two or three pairs of portières add appreciably to the toils of settling.

Concerning curtains one might write to an indefinite length, but as I have already said, it is impossible to declare positively on the matter. Every year brings a fresh crop of textiles and the purchaser can decide best what she wants after she has gone to several shops and inspected the stocks they offer.

CHAPTER VI

CONCERNING FURNITURE

THE hour and the power of the "set" of furniture has happily gone by. The day of the sofa, two patent rockers, and four straight-backed chairs, built of shiny wood and upholstered in tapestry with plush puffings, has passed and taken other barbarities with it.

The woman who starts out now to furnish her drawing-room seeks no uniformity of pattern. Her sofa — if she has a sofa — is quite likely to be a long box lounge in which she can keep her best gowns laid at full length. This couch has a cover thrown over it, is heaped with cushions, and may, at a pinch, be converted into a bed for the chance visitor. If this housekeeper is lucky enough to possess another room that may be turned into a bedchamber in an emergency, she will possibly yearn for a Davenport sofa or a wicker settle with upholstered seat and back.

Apart from this she will probably select a varied assortment of chairs. One of these may be a comfortable and artistic "mission" rocker of the make so happily in fashion to-day. Another may be of the sort known as a "tea-chair," for no apparent reason except that its arm is wide enough to allow one to set a cup and saucer upon it. There may also be a Morris chair or a deep Sleepy Hollow in which to loaf and invite one's soul. Almost certainly there will be one or more wicker chairs, made easy with cushions and one such seat may very possibly have a pocket in the arm or at the side in which, as one rises to greet a guest, one may thrust the book or paper one has been reading or the bit of sewing that has occupied the fingers.

For since the drawing-room is usually the living room and the library as well as the reception room in a flat or small house there are many liberties permitted with it in the way of furnishing. The walls may be lined with low bookshelves—one of the happiest ways, after all, in which a room can be furnished,—and the smoking stand of the master of the house may have a position between the desk where his wife writes her notes and the afternoon tea table where she

offers hospitality to her guests. The array of cups and saucers that once gathered dust in every drawing-room has vanished from our homes, and the tea table now serves as an assembly place for the papers and magazines that may be swept to one side to make room for the tea tray when the maid brings it in as five o'clock draws near.

Heavy upholstery is seldom seen nowadays in the living room. The cushions that soften chair and couch are often movable and even when fixed their covering is not of rich fabrics. The unsuitability of using these for cottage furniture is recognized by those who make it. Corduroy comes in many shades and wears well, toning down pleasantly with usage. Soft-tinted fabrics in imitation of the shades and designs of old hand-wrought tapestry are plentiful, cheap, and artistic. For the warm weather, slip covers may be fashioned of cretonne or of the art ticking that is quite as pretty as the cretonne and much cheaper.

In the other furnishings of the room the individual taste of the hostess is bound to assert itself. Unless it is very bizarre it cannot go far wrong, provided she will bear certain things in mind. One is to keep the tones of the room low

and to make a spot of bright color here and there heighten the effect of the subdued tints, while she yet takes heed not to distract the eye by too many of these breaks into brightness.

Another principle the furnisher must observe is that of putting striking ornaments or pictures far enough apart to avoid clashing. One object that demands attention in loud tones should not be cheek by jowl with another of equal vehemence. Again, the law of contrast should be studied. The bit of bric-à-brac that warrants consideration should appear against a background of an inconspicuous kind and the ornaments that elbow it should be modest in nature.

In hanging pictures much more care is demanded to secure the right effect than such work usually receives. The hit-or-miss fashion in which pictures are sometimes hung gives few or none of them a chance to show real merit and in many cases one kills the other effectually.

Before one begins picture hanging the stock in hand should be looked over and a general scheme decided upon. Those that do not fit into this should be unhesitatingly banished from the room for which one is planning. There are other rooms in the house and no desire to hang a fine

picture in a prominent place can justify the decorator in sacrificing the general effect.

Every one who has given attention to matters of home decoration—and it is taken for granted that the young people who are furnishing their home have not entered upon their work unprepared — understands that some pictures may go together while others must be ruled out of the companionship of the select. Oil-paintings, for instance, do not hit it off well with water-colors, while these may associate on friendly terms with etchings, pastels, drawings, photographs, and some engravings. If an oil-painting of exceptional excellence comes into such an assemblage it should have a corner to itself and not be brought into direct contact or contrast with pictures of another order. Figure pieces and landscapes should not be mixed indiscriminately. This does not mean that they may not appear in the same room, but that they must not be at too close quarters.

In the wall spaces where the light is strongest should be placed water-colors in delicate tints, fine engravings, soft etchings, and the like. Farther away from the light should hang the darker and more heavily shaded pictures, in

which the strong glare has the unfortunate effect of revealing unsuspected glooms that show to disadvantage in the clearest light. From the faintly colored pictures near the window the glance should be led skilfully and involuntarily to the deeper-toned pictures farther back in the room.

This rule is not immutable. Sometimes a dark corner of the room shows a need of brightening that demands a lighter picture, or a spot of brilliant color may be risked there. Or one of the darker pictures may require a stronger light to display its best points. Whatever the order, however, harmony is to be studied first, last, and all the time. The etching with its broad white mat should not be put next to the carbon with its heavy black frame. The eye must be led gently — not jerked rudely — from one picture to the other.

All this applies perhaps especially to the pictures on the walls of the drawing-room. The same rule may be observed in the dining-room —although pictures of a rather different kind usually appear here. Not that in this day and generation one feels it necessary to adhere to fruit or fish or game pieces for the dining-room. Any other style of picture may be used here and

it is particularly the place for oil-paintings and family portraits. That is, if they are good portraits. It may be that there is something in the nature of a *memento mori* in the fashion which decided that the counterfeit presentments of dead and gone ancestors should sit at meat with us, and to the simple soul they seem more in place in a library. But since there is, as a rule, no library in a flat, the dining-room is chosen rather than the drawing-room for family portraits,—preferably for those in oils.

There should not be too many pictures in the dining-room. A crowd of witnesses around, when in pictured presence, have a discouraging effect upon the appetite and the digestion. Leave a few plain, bare spots on the wall with which to rest the eyes between the courses. Put a valuable or effective plate up here and there, cross a pair of swords above the mantel, and in any other pleasing fashion vary the arrangement of the pictures. And never let any stress of family feeling move you to put photographs of friends or relatives in the dining-room. The oil-paintings may be tolerated, the photographs never.

The choice of dining-room furniture is a delicate business. Here is a golden chance to exer-

cise reserve. Few young people have the courage to go slowly and wait for chances to pick up just what they wish for the dining-room. It is much easier to hie themselves to the furniture shop and buy the table, the chairs, and the sideboard that conventionality dictate. Yet if they will but have patience, they may find the old table and sideboard and low-boy of mahogany or of some other well seasoned wood. These will give a distinction to their dining-room nothing else can supply. I have known persons with the gift of patience who had eaten from deal and made a dinner-wagon take the place of a sideboard for years that they might at last gather about their own Chippendale and eat therefrom their food in contentment of heart. And no one who saw the Chippendale questioned but what it was worth waiting for.

The orthodox furnishing of the bedroom nowadays seems to begin with a brass or brass and iron bedstead. There was never a more sensible fashion. The brass beds are still high priced and it is doubtful if they are really much more attractive than the white iron beds with the brass trimmings. These can be bought for much less money and when they become battered may be

made over again with a coat of white enamel paint. At the best of times a bed is never cheap if one gets good springs and a hair mattress. Here, at least, is one of the places where it rarely pays to practise economy.

A young, active person, with a clear conscience and an exceptional digestion, may perhaps sleep as well on straw as on curled hair. But sound and easy sleep is usually the prerogative of childhood. The hard worker is sometimes tired enough to sleep anywhere, but the kind of toil to which the American man is subjected is more likely to produce insomnia than to induce drowsiness. The national nervousness connotes sleeplessness. If there is any adjunct to the bedchamber that can promote peaceful slumber it is less extravagant to buy it than to go without it.

The best curled hair for mattresses costs more in the first outlay but less in the end. It can be made over again and again, and come out as good as new, while the short hair derives little benefit from any treatment.

The best beds are for the master and mistress of the house. I say "beds" advisedly, for more and more is growing the sensible fashion of separate beds. The pair that holds the heads of the

household will cost a little more than would one large double bed, but the inmates will be far more comfortable.

One can hardly go into a mention of the sleeping quarters of a flat without touching upon the folding-bed question. This may be disposed of briefly. Never buy one if by any possibility you can get along without it. It is sometimes a necessary evil. When inevitable, the folding iron beds are preferable to any others. This is not meant as a reflection upon the comfortable slumber that may be enjoyed in folding-beds of diverse patterns. But at the best, they are hard to keep sweet and well aired and if in a black moment vermin once find a lodgment in their un-get-at-able crevices, the only satisfactory use to which the bed can be put is to convert it into the foundation for an election bonfire.

White enamel washstands are for sale that go well with the white beds and in these days of cheap and pretty porcelains the set of china for it is not a painful item. There are admirable shapes to be found in the plain white ware and when one begins on the decorated sets the only difficulty is to make a choice. If possible it should harmonize with the tints of the wall paper.

When it comes to a chiffonier or dresser or bureau the selection must be determined quite as much by the space as by the money at command. Any one of these pieces of furniture may be bought separately from the set, and in almost any wood. For the benefit of the woman who longs for a full length view of herself and has no pier glass, a mirror may be set flat on the back of a closet door. The frame of this mirror may be of the simplest, —merely strips of moulding to match the woodwork,—but the reflection will be as satisfactory as though glass and frame had cost a fabulous sum. The bedroom chairs are usually odd and all the better on that account. A box for the man's shirts or the woman's shirtwaists is a useful if not an indispensable article of furniture for the chamber.

The pictures in the bedroom are too often the left-overs that can find place nowhere else. This is a mistake. On the wall where the waking eyes will see it should hang some uplifting or cheering or helpful picture. What this may be is decided by the taste of the owner of the room. One turns her morning glance upon a *Madonna and Child*, another has given the best place in her room to Rossetti's *Annunciation*, while a

third has Bates's *Reading Homer* on the spot where it can meet her gaze from her pillow. The pictures should never be distressing or so trivial as to be annoying.

The kitchen furniture is decided by the size of that apartment. Usually it will hold little besides a chair or two and a table. It is a good idea to have this covered with zinc. The servant's bedroom is too limited to allow much besides a cot — have this of iron, — a bureau, and a chair. But all these, if simple, may at least be clean and neat.

CHAPTER VII

UNCONSIDERED TRIFLES OF HOUSE-FURNISHING

THE taken-for-granted things about a house foot up to a depressing sum total. The young couple need not cherish the conviction that when they have purchased the main things that show about the house the worst of their trials are over.

The beds and tables, stools and candlesticks are essentials, of course. But there are trifles that are often unconsidered which make a sad showing when the bills come in. And first and foremost of these may be placed linen.

The average young man who goes to housekeeping has a monumental ignorance as to what is needed in that line. How should he know? He is aware of the fact that there are sheets and pillow-cases, blankets and spreads. He has seen them on the beds in which he has slept. But how many are needed to supply a small establishment

and what they are to cost he knows not at all. The young woman's ideas are very possibly no less hazy, unless she has had an exceptionally sensible mother, who has given her enough share in the housekeeping to learn something about household supplies, or has put her through a course of general information before the wedding day arrived.

The German fashion of a linen chest might with advantage be introduced into this country. I have known of homes here where from her infancy the small girl's wedding plenishing has been kept in view. It is not unusual for the mother to begin collecting spoons for her little daughter before the child is a year old. I know one young woman who by the time she had attained her twenty-second year and a husband had a good supply of small silver ready against her housekeeping. And yet this is not so necessary as the accumulation of linen. For the small silver is almost always found among the wedding gifts, whereas there are few friends who condescend to anything so homely and so useful as the outfitting of a linen closet.

It is a wise girl or a wise mother who begins on the linen supplies as soon as the girl is engaged

to be married or even earlier. I do not mean the gathering together of ordinary everyday supplies, such as cotton sheets and pillow-slips, but the finer items of the napery. This is the time to purchase and mark towels, one or two at a time, to embroider initials on pillow-slips of linen, to put hemstitching on doilies and napkins and tea-cloths and table-cloths. If this is not done before the actual work of the trousseau is begun, it is very likely never to be done at all. When a girl once undertakes the bits of daintiness that are to beautify underclothing, the embellishment of bed and table linen will probably be neglected.

Even taking for granted that this sort of thing has been looked after and that some generous and sensible friend has presented tablecloths and napkins for special occasions, it is not probable that the young housekeeper can avoid purchasing the commonplace, everyday articles that are needed in her linen closet. For these she may make out her list, confining herself to such things as she feels she must have. In this fortunate day, when ready-made linen may be had for the buying, providing oneself with linen is no such undertaking as it was when it all had to be made for use. That is a rather old-fashioned view

which holds that linen bought in shops is inferior to that made at home. At a first-class linen store one can buy all that one needs, ready-made, or if hand work is preferred to machine labor, can order hand work done. The cutting will be as careful, the stitching as neat and as durable as that turned out by the private seamstress. And the toil and trouble will be infinitely less.

In the days of our mothers and grandmothers, it was thought that every young woman who went to housekeeping must have at least a dozen of everything and a dozen pairs of every article of linen was even better. To this day, the dear old ladies shake their heads over the shiftlessness of the rising generation and indulge in reminiscences of what they had in stock when they went to housekeeping, forgetting that those days of the house and these of the flat mark two different orders of living. Often the young housekeeper has positively not the shelf-room for more than a limited supply of linen. If she has more it must be stored in a trunk in the cellar.

Bearing this in mind, the young woman does not burden herself down with more than she has place for. She buys six pairs of cotton sheets. That is, if she has three beds to provide for.

Even with four beds, this will do, if the prevalent custom is followed of changing but one sheet a week. If both sheets are changed weekly, two pairs of sheets should be allowed for each bed. The decline of the bolster has become so marked that one seldom sees it now, unless in the shape of one of the round bolsters, which serve more for ornament than for use. Even the owners or inheritors of the old-fashioned bolsters have cut them over into pillows or sofa cushions.

The change is one endorsed by common-sense. A pillow is more easily handled than a bolster. It may be tugged around and turned over and punched up as a bolster cannot be. If two persons occupy the same bed, each may arrange his own pillows to suit himself, without feeling that he is interfering with the comfort of his neighbor. The pillow-slip is more easily laundered than the bolster cover. So a supply of the latter need not be made and with the six pairs of sheets must be purchased six pairs of pillow-slips. The lovers of ease will probably have a few pairs of linen pillow-slips, although there are to be found certain persons who prefer fine cotton at all seasons of the year. Those who like linen will, however, find it worth while to pay the added price it

demands. And it is a good deal more expensive. Good cotton pillow-slips may be bought from fifteen cents apiece up, while linen can rarely be found at less than a dollar a pair and these are of coarse quality.

A word here concerning hemstitched pillow-slips. They are much prettier than the plain hem, but they are very poor economy. The hemstitching breaks before the other part of the slip is worn out and the housekeeper finds herself with shabby linen on her hands that would still be in good repair if it were not for the ornamentation that has been put on it in the way of hemstitching.

Plain cotton sheets are not dear. Very often they can be purchased at a sale at prices that are phenomenally low to those who remember what such things cost only ten or fifteen years ago. As good a single sheet as any one wishes can be bought for a dollar a pair, and it is possible to get them good, though of a coarser quality, for from thirty-five to forty cents apiece. Double sheets cost in the same proportion.

Bedspreads vary in cost. The ordinary plain crocheted spreads may be bought for a small sum, —from seventy-five cents to a dollar apiece, for a

single bed, the price being determined by the quality. Marseilles spreads are higher. One or two of these are excellent to have, but a good grade of crocheted spread generally satisfies all requirements and is easier to do up than the Marseilles. There are spreads in the latter weave that come in delicate colors and these are sometimes very pretty to go with a room where a corresponding shade is followed in the wall decoration, although pure white is always delightful in any bedchamber. For three beds it is well to have from four to six spreads. This permits a change, and it is bad management if all the spreads are allowed to become soiled at once. Fully as important as the spreads are mattress covers that come in quilted cotton and of a size to fit any bed. They are a great protection to the ticking and soften the bed and make it warmer. It is rather cold comfort to have only the thickness of a sheet between one and the mattress.

When it comes to towels, the woman with a drop of housekeeping blood in her will feel a longing to rush into extravagance. There is nothing that is more enticing than a pile of soft fine towels, either in huckaback or damask, and it will be a comfort to the woman with a passion

for fine household linen to be told that she should not begin with less than two or three dozen good towels, a dozen plain towels for the servants, and half a dozen Turkish bath towels. She can get good towels from forty and fifty cents apiece. Very fair towels may be bought for three dollars a dozen, but although they will wear well they are not so pleasant to the touch nor so attractive to the eye as those that come a little higher.

Table linen is never cheap. Sometimes one sees bargains advertised and when the damask is stiff with dressing it makes a fine show. But all this specious gloss and finish disappear when the linen has been once through the laundry. Three or four tablecloths the housekeeper will need, as well as three or four squares to use for the centre of the table at breakfast and luncheon. With each of the tablecloths must go a dozen napkins and there should be at least a dozen allowed to every two of the squares. The number of napkins needed will depend upon the habits of the family in the way of changing linen. In some households a fresh napkin is given to each person at every meal. This is delightful, but extravagant. It not only demands a large supply of linen and increases the washing, but puts more wear upon

the napkins. They are washed so often that they wear out very quickly. In other homes the napkins are fresh every night at dinner, and in some homes there is a fresh doily every morning at breakfast, while the napkin that is put on at dinner is used a second time at luncheon. It is hard to reconcile oneself to changing the napkin less often than once a day and a change at every meal is, of course, the ideal mode. But ideals come high and cannot always be followed by young people of moderate means.

The finer items of table linen, like doilies, fish and fruit napkins, cloths for hot bread, sideboard covers, tea-cloths, carving-cloths, centrepieces, and the like, must be bought as one can. It is a rare housekeeper who has not gifts of that sort of thing. When she must buy them she can find them at a low cost. All linen shops and department stores have such things for sale, usually in the plain white, which is, after all, about the most satisfactory thing for regular wear.

When one turns out of the dining-room into the kitchen, there are more expenses ahead. The wise housekeeper does not rely upon the light of nature or chance information here, but sits herself down and studies the lists that have

been drawn up by more competent judges than herself of what is required in a tolerably well furnished kitchen. The general consensus of opinion seems to be that agate ironware is the best for the housekeeper of a small kitchen force. The copper utensils are fine and the aluminum are light. But copper is hard to keep clean and aluminum is so thin that its contents need perpetual watching. Agate iron comes in gray and in blue and in blue and white and can be kept clean readily. It is light and easily handled and seems to possess about as many desirable qualifications with as few drawbacks as any other material in the market for pots and pans.

Of saucepans the housekeeper must have five. Two of these must have a quart capacity and two a two-quart capacity each. The fifth must be a large one holding four quarts. A couple of these may be of tin, cheaper and more perishable than the agateware. There must also be one three-quart and one two-quart double boiler, two dishpans,—unless there is a butler's pantry, when one will serve,—two dripping-pans for meat, a large cake-tin, three jelly-tins, as many pie-plates and a set of patty-pans, a broiler,—unless there is one connected with the gas stove,—

a frying-pan, a two-quart pitcher, a colander, a graduated quart measure and a graduated half-pint measuring cup, a couple of jelly-moulds, a pudding-mould, a teakettle, a teapot, and a coffee-pot. So much for large ware in metal. In wood there must be a chopping bowl, a bread-board and bowl, a rolling pin, a small board for cutting bread and another for cutting meat, a potato-beetle, a scrubbing brush and pail, a pair of butter-paddles, and one or two spoons.

In stoneware, there should be a crock for bread, three yellow mixing bowls of different sizes,—one quite large,—two small bowls, a platter, half a dozen cups, saucers, and plates, and a shallow dish or two, either pudding-dishes or deep pie-plates, in which to keep things in the refrigerator or safe. Then there are a host of small essentials. There must be a chopping knife, a cork-screw, a pair of scissors, a set of skewers, a meat-fork and a toasting fork, a nutmeg-grater and a cheese-grater, a strainer for gravy and one for coffee, a can opener, an apple corer, a meat-knife and a meat-saw, a bread-knife, a couple of small knives for peeling and slicing vegetables, two or three mixing spoons, spoons; knives, and forks for the servant's use, a flour-dredger, a box for salt

and one for pepper, a cake-cutter, a cake-turner, a skimmer, a split spoon, an ice-pick, a couple of dish-mops, a hanging soap-dish, a soap-shaker, a wire dishcloth, a sink-brush, a garbage-pail, and an oil-can.

When it comes to mechanical aids, there are several things one must have, like an egg-beater, a vegetable-press, a cream-churn, a lemon-squeezer. There is a host of appliances one longs for, such as scales, a frying basket and frying kettle, border moulds and moulds for jellies, ices, charlotte russe, pans for rolls, muffins, and corn-bread, oyster- and fish-broilers, nappies, patty-pans, fancy cake-cutters and -tins, knives for all sorts of uses, small pitchers and additional bowls, canisters, cake-boxes, spice-boxes, and more other things than one can mention.

All these things are very nice to have, but it is astonishing how many of them one can do without when put to it. It is a great mistake to have too many things in a flat kitchen. There is usually so little room for them that they get in one another's way. And if the housekeeper has everything for every sort of work she is denied the dear delight of making one thing take the place of another and so loses the glow of pride

that always follows such an exploit. Dry groceries keep just as well in glass jars that have held preserves as in canisters, and empty cracker-tins may be put to many uses.

Brooms, dust-pans, whisk-brooms, hearth-brushes, and the like must be provided, and a carpet-sweeper is one of the most valuable of labour-saving inventions. Dusters—either the chamois-cloth dusters that come ready-made, or squares of cheesecloth or of outing-flannel hemmed at home—must be provided, as well as a due supply of cloths for the floor and for washing windows. For these the young housekeeper would better requisition her mother or some matronly friend who has been housekeeping long enough to allow a stock of old materials to accumulate. Lacking such a source of supply, cheesecloth is the best substitute until some of the family garments are sufficiently worn to be devoted to such uses. Dish-towels, for china and glass, as well as those for coarser services, may be bought ready-made and marked for the purpose for which they are intended.

If more stress is laid upon the furnishing of the kitchen pantry than of the china closet it is because the contents of the former are more likely

to be chosen by the housekeeper. Her china is usually given to her, or if not, she buys a dinner set and a tea set. She knows well enough what she needs here and can readily compute how many plates, cups and saucers, tumblers and wine-glasses, knives, forks, spoons, and the like will be required in her little home. The fancy adjuncts,—the nappies, pudding-dishes, casseroles, fruit-bowls, and the host of other things with which we make our tables attractive will either come as gifts or be purchased from time to time as need arises or as money serves.

CHAPTER VIII

KEEPING HOUSE WITH A SERVANT

THE young couple who have never kept house usually have the most liberal ideas of the amount of work that may be accomplished by one servant. This is especially likely to be the view of the man. He seems to have even less sense of proportion than his wife—and that is putting the matter pretty strongly.

The woman who begins to keep house with one servant has her mental and physical attitude toward the work of the house determined almost altogether by the sort of life she has led before her marriage. If she has passed most of her days in hotels or boarding-houses or in a home where there has been a large domestic staff, ready to fulfil every need, she is not prone to comprehend the limited powers of one maid. If, on the contrary, the young housekeeper has been a member of a small household where few servants were

employed, she is by way of being considerate of her servant and of appreciating the many little items there are in housework that take time and strength and yet look like nothing when they are done.

On this consideration or lack of it will much of the comfort of the new home depend. Domestic servants are like other human beings and quickly resent injustice or any form of imposition. If they once get it into their heads that the new mistress is inclined to demand too much work for her money there is bound to be trouble.

Bearing this in mind, the young housekeeper must be wary when she engages her maid. If she herself has had no experience in such work, —and many a girl has done for years the work of engaging servants for a mother or a married sister,—it is well for her to enlist the kindly offices of some friend who can supply the knowledge she lacks. For everything depends in making it clear to a maid at the outset what she will be called upon to do. The first steps count here even more than in most things.

The advice of the experienced friend will be of value in the first place in directing the young housekeeper where to go to find a servant. The

general fashion is to seek one at an intelligence office, but there is as great a difference between these as there is in the classes of mistresses and maids that frequent them. To some of these offices it is a sheer waste of time for the woman in search of a general housework maid to betake herself. That kind do not go to certain offices. There are several of these establishments in New York where one may hope to find good butlers, "second men," trained waitresses or housekeepers, or specialists in other lines of domestic service. But the "general housework servant" does not flock here. All the servants who patronize these high-toned offices expect a price in harmony with the tone and usually get it. The women who desire maids of all work look for them in other quarters.

Some such office as this must the young housekeeper seek unless she is so fortunate as to secure her future domestic blessing or curse through a friend or by means of an advertisement. Some of the best servants I have ever known have been engaged in this way. But answering advertisements is tiresome and sometimes unprofitable work and the housekeeper generally feels that she would rather go to an office and have the

prospective kitchen occupants pass in review before her than hunt up remote advertisers and ascend countless stairs to interview them. The fee that she has to pay at the office sinks into nothingness by comparison.

Whether in the office or at the house or anywhere else, the mistress should make very plain to the maid at the first just what she expects of her in the way of work. No room should be left for future misapprehensions. It makes no difference that the housework girl, having taken all domestic labor for her province, would seem to have little opportunity to specialize and small room to complain at being called upon to do duties outside of her sphere. The woman who has had experience with the housework maid knows that there are just as many things the latter did not "hire to do" as can be found by the most exclusive butler or parlor maid on Fifth Avenue.

To touch upon some of these: I have known general housework maids who resented bitterly being asked to announce the meals in the fashion that is taken as a matter of course in most well-conducted houses. One of these maids, in a home where bells were not in use, flatly refused

to give any other announcement of a meal than that supplied by "one clear call" from the bottom of the staircase. She would give a strident cry from that point of vantage that luncheon or dinner or breakfast was ready. More than that she would not do. If she were asked to make any different effort in the line of announcing meals she would quit. And quit she did!

Other housework servants object strenuously to being required to do anything more in the way of waiting than to merely put the dishes on the table and remove them at the end of the course. Such frills as passing vegetables or other dishes or coming in to bring a fresh plate are contemned. Other maids do not like to have to wait on the door if the mistress is in the house to do it and refuse to admit the thought of company on washing or ironing day.

Such points and many more must be guarded. It is safe to tell the maid that she will be expected to do anything that the mistress requires, and then to take pains by a due quota of consideration to see that she is not overtaxed. The question of afternoons and evenings out should be clearly understood, the fashion in which the house is to be kept in such minor matters as

serving, waiting, and the like made perfectly plain before the maid is engaged. It is very easy to grant fresh privileges if it seems best. It is very hard to put fresh duties that have not been specified into the maid's daily round of toil.

To the woman who has had to keep house with a troop of children or a family of half a dozen, the business of engaging a maid who will do the work for two persons seems the simplest thing in the world. So for that matter does dainty living with one servant when there are but the master and mistress of the house to be looked after. They must be very *exigeant* or marvellously inconsiderate if they cannot do well under those circumstances.

The first duty of the housekeeper after she has the maid in the house is to direct her as to the general routine of her work. This the housekeeper should plan out in advance. But let her be on her guard against putting too much at once into the alleged brain of the new incumbent. It is not likely that the latter has a highly trained intelligence and it takes time for her to grasp the way in which orders are given by her new mistress. Many a housekeeper "queers" herself at the start by the fact that she does not issue direc-

tions in a mode that the maid understands and the latter becomes discouraged and feels that she will never get along in the new place.

The mistress must speak slowly and distinctly until her maid becomes accustomed to her habit of speech. She must also be sure that the maid comprehends what is expected of her. To do this she must often offer her commands in homœopathic doses.

I have known old housekeepers who always spared their maids' intelligence to such an extent that they would not give orders for more than one meal at a time. After breakfast they would tell about luncheon, after luncheon they would announce what was desired for dinner, and not until dinner was out of the way would they express their wishes for breakfast.

This may have its advantages, but the drawbacks seem to offset these. If the maid knows in the morning what will be required for the two other meals of the day she is better able to plan her work than if the dinner is sprung upon her after noon. If her memory is poor it is well for her to have it exercised a little and the mistress may go into the kitchen after luncheon to make sure that the morning's orders have been remembered.

So far as the general daily work of the house is concerned little time is needed to get the servant into the way of doing it by rote. At the first she must be made to understand what is looked for in the way of hours. She must be told at what time breakfast is to be served and instructed as to what duties she must have out of the way before that meal.

It should be taken for granted that she should rise at least an hour and a half before breakfast and have time to get her fire started if there is a coal range, her kettle filled and over the flame and her porridge on the boil if the cooking is done by gas. Then, if she is a good worker she can have the hall brushed out, the dining-room dusted, the living rooms of the house aired, and everything fresh and clean before it is time for her to begin setting the table and making ready the rest of the breakfast.

Maids of all work differ as much in "smartness" as do persons in other walks of life. Some of them have the knack of turning off work and they and their employers are in luck. Such women on wash-day will have a tubful of clothes out before breakfast and will never let their ironing drag on beyond Tuesday night. They will

get their work out of the way and have time for a little leisure to themselves between washing the luncheon dishes and beginning preparations for dinner. Others, no less willing, lack "faculty" and while busy all the time are never through. They are eternally occupied at something or other, and the mistress grows weary trying to plan their duties in such a way that she may feel that they are not overworked.

When the young housekeeper has such a maid as that there are only two courses open to her. She may discharge the servant and get another. Or she may find that the servant has some qualities that make up for her defects. She may be slow, but she may also be imperturbably good natured and willing to do anything that is asked of her. She may let her ironing drag all the week,—and there are few things that are more of a trial to a housekeeper,—but she may be a treasure in case of sickness, a standby in times of unexpected company or any other household cataclysm.

That is one of the earliest experiences of the young housekeeper,—to find that she cannot hope for perfection, but that things must be made to balance and to establish an average. Few

servants do not leave more or less to be desired. But unless they are hopelessly incompetent, lazy, or dirty, or have some unpardonable fault, like dishonesty or drunkenness, it is wiser to stick to an evil one has than to rush to those of which one knows nothing.

The before-breakfast work over and the breakfast served, the maid can go to her own breakfast, unless she has had it already. In the homes where breakfast is a late or an irregular meal it is well to encourage the maid to eat something early, before she is tired and faint from working. A cup of tea and a piece of bread and butter then will often save her temper and her nerves for the rest of the day.

While the family is at breakfast or directly afterwards, the maid may go into the bedrooms and do the work there. After that comes the conference with the mistress as to what is to be served for luncheon and dinner, the inspection, which should never be omitted, of the refrigerator and pantry. Then the maid may wash the dishes and from those go to the special work planned for the day.

There are certain things that are a matter of course every day in the week. Among these are

the brushing up and dusting of the bathroom, the washing out of tubs and basins, the wiping, off of paint, and the dusting of living rooms. Most young housekeepers prefer to dust their own dainty china and bric-a-brac. There are even some old housekeepers who preserve the habit. This lessens the work of the maid and gives her space for other things. Soon after breakfast is the best time for the housekeeper to go to market and she should see that the maid has her work mapped out for her before leaving the house.

Naturally, there will be certain days on which certain work is done. In the old times these used to be laid down very accurately. Monday and Tuesday were washing and ironing days, as a matter of course. Wednesday was baking day. Thursday was sweeping day, and Friday the silver was cleaned,—or the work of the two days was exchanged,—while on Saturday was done the second of the week's two bakings and preparations were made for Sunday.

The dweller in city tents cannot always follow this régime. To begin with, she cannot even do her washing on Monday under some circumstances. The day on which she has a right to the roof or the yard for drying will depend upon

the dictum of the janitor or the custom of the house for various flats. She may have to put off her washing until Wednesday or even later in the week. This makes it necessary for her to change her whole domestic order of affairs. The sweeping and silver cleaning may come the first of the week instead of the last. There may very possibly be no baking done in the house, as is the habit with the majority of New York's flat-dwellers. It undoubtedly costs more money to buy bread from the baker, but it saves care and work and in these days of admirable bakers the housekeeper takes her choice of economies and decides that to make all the bread at home costs more than it comes to, especially in a small family. So there is the baking day left clear for something else. Then is the time when windows may be washed or brasses polished or some other kind of work turned off.

When the housekeeper has once satisfied herself that her maid is tolerably competent and may be trusted to do her work with a certain degree of regularity she makes a mistake if she seems to follow her up too closely. I say "seems" advisedly. For the eyes of the housekeeper should be in every part of her domain and no branch of work should escape her vigilance. But this the

servant should feel rather than see. She should know that the mistress is quick to detect work carelessly done and just as quick to perceive work that is properly accomplished and to commend it. The virtue and value of praise are not enough apprehended by the average housekeeper.

The same diplomatic treatment should be pursued in directing what work is to be done. Once the maid understands what is expected of her she ought to make a habit of doing it without being told about it over and over again. It should be taken for granted that she will do the before-breakfast brushing and dusting and airing, that she will keep the bathroom tidy, wash out her refrigerator, sweep this room or that on the day appointed for it. If she seems lax in such matters she must be reminded of them, but the conscientious servant—and there are many of them, —almost always takes a pride in her work and resents, secretly at least, the assumption that she will not do it unless she is daily reminded of the task she has on hand. This does not apply to special work, as a matter of course, but in the other lines of duty it is well for the mistress to tell the servant what is expected of her and then leave her to do it without nagging.

Consideration in another respect should be studied. The mistress should plan for the maid to do her heavy or dirty work in the morning. Sweeping, scrubbing, washing windows, cleaning silver or brasses should be performed early in the day,—not left until the afternoon, when the maid wishes to make herself look tidy. Even if she has to cook the dinner she may cover her afternoon frock with a big gingham apron and be ready to exchange this for a white apron if she must go to the door. While if she has dirty or tiresome work to do in the afternoon she is discouraged in the attempt at neatness and feels that it is hardly worth while.

When there is to be company the mistress must either plan to do a good deal herself or else expect to have extra help. One cannot look for everything in a maid of all work. If one is secured who is a decent cook, washer, and ironer, a tolerable waitress and chambermaid, is willing, neat, and quick, she is a treasure. Without being truckled to in any way it is well worth while to grant her certain privileges and to take the pains to spare her and make her feel that she is appreciated as she deserves.

CHAPTER IX

KEEPING HOUSE WITHOUT A SERVANT

ONLY the young woman who has had some previous knowledge of housekeeping should attempt to run the most modest establishment without a servant. Any such experiment without some previous qualification is pretty sure to result in woe for all concerned.

But the newly made wife who has had a proper amount of training before she entered the solemn estate of holy matrimony may well do her own work and not feel herself at all aggrieved thereby. If she has learned her lessons in housekeeping at home or even if she has had a thorough course at a cooking school, the work will be a simpler affair than any of her ancestors found it.

Everything seems to be done in this day and generation to make work easy for the woman who must live without a servant. The very existence of the flat is a concession to her

circumstances. The fact that there are no stairs to sweep, no front steps to be responsible for, no hall except the one belonging to the flat, no cellar to look after, no ashes to clean out, simplifies her work to the utmost. Cookery by gas is nothing compared to the labor of cookery by coal. No fires to make or to tend,—what would our hard-working grandmothers have thought of such luxury? No water to heat except for cooking, for the hot water comes from the cellar. No care of garbage beyond that of sending down a full can and taking an empty one from the dumb-waiter. The groceries, meat, ice, milk, bread are brought to the very door of the kitchen with no trouble of going up and down steps. This is surely the day and the hour of the woman who must do her own work.

Yet with it all there is enough to be accomplished to render it necessary for the housekeeper to plan her work carefully, so that she may have time for something else besides the daily toil. Nothing will make housework so easy as system. Without it everything seems at loose ends. With it one has some idea of how she stands, what she has accomplished and what she has yet to do.

The milkman is usually the tocsin or the alarm clock of the flat-dweller. His whistle notifies her that it is time to rise. She should have her wrapper close at hand with her slippers and whisk into these before she goes to take the milk from the dumbwaiter, fill the kettle, and light the gas under that and the porridge boiler. Then she may go to the bathroom for her tubbing, knowing that matters will take care of themselves until she is clothed.

The woman who does her own work should dress for the part. Not for her are long skirts and tight-fitting waists. A short skirt, a shirtwaist, and an apron are the best uniform. The shirtwaist she wears in hot weather may be cut to a point in front and finished with a neat ruffle or fold and the sleeves may come to the elbow only. The apron should be a generous affair, with shoulder-straps and a high bib, and the bottom of it should be finished with a ruffle, which will help the apron to flare away from the dress skirt and thus save this possible spots.

This apron should be of colored gingham or percale or even of calico, in some pretty color that is not so dark as to be unattractive and not so light as to show the very first stain. She

should have enough of these aprons to allow her always to have a clean one at hand.

Thus arrayed, she can go to the kitchen ready to make the coffee, cut and fry the bacon, or cook the eggs that more and more make the breakfast of the ordinary business man. Doubtless there are those who still insist upon steak and chops at their morning meal and feel that they cannot begin the day without a substantial foundation, but the number is growing of those who take a modified Continental breakfast and find in fruit, a porridge of some sort, a simple dish of bacon or of eggs or of fish, and coffee and rolls all they want to break their fast.

This does not take much time or trouble to prepare, and the dishes in which it was cooked and eaten are not much work to wash. The gas is turned out, and when her breakfast is done, the housekeeper may either do her dishes at once or leave them to soak in a pan of hot water and gold dust or other detergent while she goes to her bedrooms.

The time when the housekeeper does her marketing depends upon a variety of circumstances over which she has so little control that it is wiser for her to adapt herself to them than

to make the effort to change them. It may be that her iceman comes at an hour that renders it difficult for her to get out and return before his arrival. In that case she would better leave her housework until later and go out as soon as her breakfast is eaten, to lay in the provisions for the day.

The woman who does her own work does not waste much time studying the contents of her pantry and refrigerator. She has a very good idea whether the cupboard is bare or full and while she is getting breakfast she has probably planned what she will do with the left-overs, if there are any in the house. So she can sally forth at once and have the satisfaction of knowing not only that she will have the first choice of the wares of her marketman and grocer, but also that there is a reasonable probability of her getting them home before high noon.

Sometimes the housekeeper finds that it is better for her not to attempt to go to market in the morning at all. She may have other work on hand which makes it a serious matter for her to give up the time that would be demanded by the expedition for provisions. In that case she would better market in the afternoon for the following

day. I have known women who made a practice of this and in the course of the afternoon walk on business or pleasure stopped at the market and the grocery and laid in the supplies for the following day.

This system has its advantages, but it also has its flaws. It is good for a woman to get out for a breath of fresh air in the morning. Moreover, her choice of food is usually better then than later in the day,—although the advocates of the afternoon marketing say that it is often possible for them to pick up bargains that would not be forthcoming earlier. As in many other cases, there is so much to be said on both sides that the persons who follow either plan would do well to decide that their own particular necessity is the best thing that could be done.

The same rule that was advised the mistress concerning the regulation of her servant's work applies to the direction of her own. Whatever in the line of heavy or disagreeable toil can be put out of the way in the morning should be turned off then. The sweeping, the dusting, the cleaning, should never be postponed until the afternoon and whatever there is of unpleasant work in the making ready of vegetables and the

like for dinner that can be finished up in the morning the housekeeper would better give her attention to before lunch.

There is really not very much to do in the well regulated flat when there are but two in the family. Things do not get out of order unless there are more persons in the house. The windows in the drawing-room and bedroom should have been opened when the husband and wife went to breakfast, and if the chairs and other furniture that were deranged during the evening were pushed back into place before going to bed the disorderly look and the discouragement that accompanies it are spared the housekeeper the next morning. There will be some work to be done with the carpet-sweeper, and more with the dusting cloth, a bed or perhaps two to make, some wiping up to be done in the bathroom. There will be very little more than this, except on the days when regular cleaning is to be undertaken.

There are some households where the plucky little wives do literally all the work, washing and ironing included. But there are more homes occupied by people of moderate means where the wife does the ordinary work and a woman comes

in for a day or a day and a half a week. By careful planning a woman may be hired who will wash in the morning, sweep and clean in the afternoon, and return the day following to do the ironing. This is one of the most justifiable expenses the husband and wife can allow themselves. For economy is misconstrued when it is considered as the mere saving of money. That is the least of its functions. The economy that saves money and uses up strength and energy and youth and the capability of enjoyment of natural and healthy pleasures is in reality the rankest of extravagances.

One of the faults into which the young housekeeper slips when her husband is obliged to lunch downtown is that of not feeding herself properly. I do not know why I should restrict this to the young housekeeper, however, for the old one is just as likely to be a sinner in this respect. It seems hardly worth while to either one of them to bother about setting the table and preparing the meal when there will be but the one person and that person the one of least consequence in the household to eat it. If the man of the house were to be there it would be another matter, but as it is, it does not seem worth while. So as

likely as not the housekeeper butters a slice of bread, makes herself a cup of tea, and takes both from the corner of the table,—stoking rather than eating. Then "she washes one cup and saucer and puts it on the shelf," and congratulates herself on having fulfilled an unwelcome duty with a minimum of trouble.

Here is another illustration of false economy and real extravagance. The time would be well spent that would be put into cooking a little food that would tempt the appetite and lead the woman to eat something nutritious. It may be quite true that we all eat too much, but when one narrows down on quantity, the quality of the food should be more closely looked into. And bread and tea are not force producers or red blood makers. The woman will need sometime the reserve she is pulling on now when she nourishes herself insufficiently.

After the lunch dishes—if there are any—are washed and out of the way, the best thing that can be done by the woman who does her own work is to lie down and take a nap. I do not mean a siesta that will take half the afternoon, but a little rest that will permit her nerves and muscles to relax and prevent her going to bed at

night so tired out that she does not feel as though she ever cared to get up again.

Of course this seems like rank extravagance and waste of time to the woman who feels that she must drive from the moment she lifts her head from her pillow in the morning until the instant she lays it down again at night. But even she has something yet to learn if she does not comprehend that the little time she spends in repose in the afternoon will come back to her again with interest in the amount and merit of the work she is able to do when she gets up. It is not much that is needed. Half an hour if it can be spared, fifteen or twenty minutes if thirty seems too much. That is all. But if the little rest is taken in a darkened room with loosened clothing, it is astonishing the difference it will make in the woman's work and temper before the end of the day.

Perhaps the tasks of the woman who keeps no servant are more irksome in the afternoon phase than in the morning. In the early part of the day she takes it for granted that she should busy herself in her kitchen and dining-room. But in the afternoon she wants to dress herself in dainty garb. That is the time when she goes out to

make visits, or expects callers, or treats herself to any little dissipations natural to a bright young woman. Well, there is no need that she should give them up altogether. It will require a little management to preserve them, but her husband has to manage a good deal when he wants to get off from his post of duty and does not always accomplish it even then. So the housekeeper must plan for her outing a day or two in advance and arrange matters so that she will not have a long or elaborate dinner on hand when she is not to be in until late in the afternoon. Then is one of the occasions when she and her husband may dine out. If they are to have dinner at home she must plan to spare herself work.

Such planning is more easily achieved than one would think. The vegetables may be prepared ahead of time, the meat may be ready to pop into the oven, the salad may be washed or the dessert arranged before she leaves the house, the table may be set, and when she comes in all she will have to do will be either to slip into a house dress or to cover herself with her big apron and get to the work of finishing the preparations for the dinner.

The young couple should make up their minds

that there are certain things they must do without. One of these is the serving of elaborate courses. Not but what they will have their dinner served in courses. They must never allow themselves to get into a higgledy-piggledy way of doing things. Anything is better than lowering their ideals, except in a time of great emergency. Even then such lowering is only temporary. But they must make up their minds not to care if they cannot live in the same style as they did before their marriage. The prevalent idea that young people must begin where their fathers and mothers left off is responsible for much straining after show and luxury. Not after real comfort, be it understood, for that is not dependent upon large means. It is the mistake of modern American life that has been voiced in the clever saying that we can get along without the necessities if we can only have the luxuries.

So the woman who does her own work must reconcile herself to going without some things she had taken as a matter of course before her marriage. Again the doctrine of compensations may be studied to advantage. She has so much that she never had before,—so much that is really worth while,—that it is foolish to waste good

energies in lamenting over the trifles she has had to give up.

The woman who does her own work should learn how to shirk scientifically. This does not mean that she should neglect work which should by rights be done or that she should do it in a slovenly way. But there are times when every housekeeper must choose what shall be crowded out, her rest, her chance to read a little, to keep in touch with what is going on in the world, or the laborious and unnecessarily thorough accomplishment of an insignificant task. In that case she should unhesitatingly decide that the latter is of less importance and let it go to the wall.

As, for instance, the washing of the dinner dishes. It is very nice to get them out of the way as soon as the meal is over and feel that the whole house is in apple-pie order. But when her husband has come home tired and longing for her to talk to him, or play or sing to him and rest him, or full of the new book he has brought home to read to her or of the business matter he wants to talk over with her, the wife makes a big mistake when she sticks to the dishes and obliges her husband to wait until all things in the kitchen and dining-room are in the order that appeals to

her housewifely soul. Instead of that, let her put the dishes in a pan in the sink, cover them with hot water and a little washing powder of some sort, and go off and leave them to take care of themselves until after breakfast the next morning. Then, when her husband has gone and she has the house to herself she can make a "killing" and get all the dishes out of the way at once. Such shirking, if one chooses to give it that name, is the sort of thing that pays.

CHAPTER X

CURRENT EXPENSES

THIS chapter is written primarily for the mistress of the house. That does not mean that the housemaster should not be permitted to peruse it, but only that it deals with matters in which she has a more particular, if not a deeper interest than he. Unless he is a man of unusual experience or of an undesirable temperament, he probably knows little of the details of domestic economy. In a large, general way, he gives it his decided approval and quite possibly practises certain esoteric economies of his own. When it comes to the little things, he is absolutely at a loss and can only show his endeavor to be of assistance to his wife by vague and generally absurd suggestions.

Upon the woman of the house, therefore, must fall the responsibility for the apportionment of the home expenses,— or at least of those that

comprise the daily and weekly outgo. The man of the house assumes the thought of the rent, of the coal bill, and perhaps of the servant's wages, although these are sometimes paid by the housekeeper out of her allowance. Which leads me to one of the points that should be settled early in the life of the new household.

In every case where it is possible, the wife should have a fixed sum given to her for current expenses. I do not like the word "given" in that connection. It sounds as though the money were bestowed as a matter of free grace, rather than set aside for this purpose, as a business transaction. The money the husband hands—or should hand—to his wife weekly or monthly is no more a boon conferred upon her than is the check he sends his landlord a present to that personage.

On this matter of the allowance the husband and wife will have to debate seriously. Not, it is to be hoped, as to the question whether or not there shall be an allowance, but as to the amount of which it shall consist. This can only be settled by debate, and the joint heads of the house are fortunate if they are common-sense persons without a ridiculous sensitiveness that

interferes with frankness. Only by a thorough understanding at the outset can foolish scenes and unfounded hurt feeling be spared them later on.

To do the man justice, the misapprehensions are more frequently on the woman's part than on his. He is usually a blundering sort of a big creature who feels that he can talk business to his wife as he would to another man. Sometimes there is to be found a woman who has sense enough to justify his supposition. Often, however, his wife has been all unused to business and resents his implication that there is to be laid upon her a financial responsibility for which she should in a measure answer to him.

When a man marries a woman who feels that marriage is a partnership and that she must look wisely to the distribution of the portion of the joint funds committed to her charge, the matter of adjusting the allowance should, from one point of view, be a tolerably easy matter. The fact that it should exist is taken for granted. The proportion which it should bear to the balance of the family expenses is the problem that demands long and careful consideration.

Already there has been an estimate made of the

apportioning of the family income. When discussing general economies, it was stated that if one fourth to one third of the income goes for rent, which in the case of a flat usually implies heat and a certain amount of service, one could hardly expect that provisions for the family could be secured for a smaller proportion. Yet this is a matter that depends so much upon the individual family that it is not wise to lay down any hard and fast rules about it. The best one can do is to make a guarded statement concerning an average ratio.

As a rule, the meat bill is the heaviest single item in a family. It does not always amount to so much as the grocer's account, but this is because the latter includes vegetables, eggs, and other things besides the articles that could be strictly included as groceries. In families where little meat is eaten the cost of food is smaller, just as a number of large meat-eaters in the household will at once run up the price of living.

All these things must be taken thought for in estimating the sum to be set aside for the household allowance. If there is a maid, the allotment of funds must be larger, not only because of her wages, but on account of the cost of her board.

As has already been said, a conservative estimate of living expenses puts down three dollars and a half a week as the actual expense for food of each person in the household. But here again it is difficult to establish a rule. The price of foods and of different articles of food varies in different cities. In one meat is so high that one marvels it can be eaten by any but the wealthy. In another city fresh vegetables are so dear that they are a rare luxury to poor people except at the height of the season. Sometimes one expense is set off by a corresponding advantage; again, the high scale of prices is maintained in every branch of living.

Unless the young housekeeper has already a practical knowledge of the prevailing prices, her best rule is to defer fixing the amount of the allowance until after she has tried an experiment of a week or two. She must, of course, keep a strict account of even the smallest expenditure. By this means she will be able at the end of a fortnight of average outlay to decide upon a sum that will cover ordinary expenses.

It is a mistake if the housekeeper fixes upon too small a sum. By this remark I have no desire to encourage extravagance, but only to warn against the probability of future inconvenience.

There are always unforeseen and perfectly legitimate extras likely to present themselves. A guest always means added cost, even if he only comes for a single meal. This would not be the case, perhaps, in a large family where a liberal provision is made, but in the household of two or three, where large joints are avoided because of the difficulty in making satisfactory disposal of what is left over, and where most provisions are bought in small quantities, the presence of each additional eater counts. There are other expenses that are prone to present themselves from time to time and on these the housekeeper should reckon in figuring up the sum to be devoted to paying provision bills. In her estimate must, of course, be included milk and ice, and perhaps even the gas bill.

There is little fear that the conscientious housekeeper will be reckless with the money entrusted to her care. It is more likely that she will stint herself in her own private indulgences rather than not bring her expenses within the sum she has settled upon. All the more reason, then, that this should be large enough to allow her to spend carefully, but without pinching unduly.

If the young couple who have set up their tent

in the Greater New York or its environs are keeping one servant to whom they pay four dollars a week, it is pretty safe for the housekeeper, if she be of an economical turn of mind, to decide that she can cover her ordinary bills with fifteen dollars a week. She is so much the better off if she can afford to ask for eighteen or twenty, but if she be a practical housewife and familiar with little economies, she can pay her maid and her bills out of the fifteen. This will not make allowance for much company and if she and her husband are given to hospitality, even although it be only of the chance guest variety, she can hardly bring her expenses within this sum. Still less can she do it if she and her husband have the habit of inviting company. But I have already said that all these matters must be reckoned on in deciding upon the amount of the allowance.

Let us suppose, however, that the young people are not devoted to rich food and can be content with the fare that is in season, and are not tempted beyond their strength by game and forced vegetables and fruit. The housekeeper can easily decide upon what shall be done with her fifteen dollars a week and the directions into which it will go.

In the first place, there is that immutable four dollars a week. There is a chance that the wages may be less. If the housekeeper is willing to take a green girl and train her, she can probably get one for from ten to fourteen dollars a month. The young mistress, who has not had the edge taken off her enthusiasms by a succession of maids whom she has brought to usefulness only to see them flit from her kitchen to another where there are higher wages, will probably feel that she is willing to expend more mental force and nerve tissue if she can save cash thereby. In that case she has a method of economy ready to her hand. Be it said, also, for her comfort, that even the woman who is able to pay good wages for a trained maid does not thereby assure herself of a fixture. Her household treasure is just as likely to take the fancy that she wishes a change and to proceed to make it as the veriest greenhorn who ever blundered through a kitchen. There are many worse things than breaking in an inexperienced maid, if she happens to be good-natured and passably intelligent.

But for the sake of argument, granting that four dollars a week goes to the maid, there is then left eleven out of which provisions must be

bought. Within such an allowance as this, fuel, whether gas or coal, cannot be included. It only embraces food supplies.

Of this quota, the largest proportion goes to the grocer and vegetable man. His bill will probably run from five to seven dollars a week. On the weeks when the meat bill is lower, the grocer's bill will probably be higher, showing that eggs, bacon, dried or tinned fish, and the like have had their place on the bill of fare. It is a simple matter to settle then what will be the amount of the meat bill. Fifty cents a week will probably pay for ice. Milk will be little more. A quart of milk a day is usually enough for the ordinary needs of a family of two or three adults. This permits the meat bill to fluctuate between three and five dollars a week, without exceeding the allowance for food.

There is little reason, however, why, in most circumstances, the butcher's bill should amount to more than three dollars and a half a week. Fifty cents a day does not seem a liberal sum to allot for meat, but it is hardly fair to reckon it in that way. If one were obliged to buy meat every twenty-four hours and were given just fifty cents with which to provide it, the problem

might be hard to solve satisfactorily. But this is not the test that is set one. One day's meat lasts over on the next day. A piece of mutton that costs ninety cents is bought for to-day's dinner. It appears hot to-night. To-morrow it is served cold at luncheon with a salad. The next day perhaps there is a curry for dinner from the remains of the meat, or a mince for the next day's lunch, while the bone serves as a foundation for the soup.

Again I must repeat that much depends upon the habits of the family to be catered for. There are some men who are content to begin the day with fruit, a cereal, eggs or bacon, rolls, and coffee. For them and their wives there is a big possibility of economy over the man who is not satisfied with so slight a meal. To offset this, however, the man who takes the heavy breakfast often eats the lightest of lunches downtown and is quite willing to devote the amount he saves at noon to the purchase of the materials to make the first meal of the day "filling."

Another matter that decides the amount of the housekeeping bills is the taste of the man and his wife in kinds of food. Some persons—lucky souls—or, rather, lucky stomachs!—have a fondness for

made dishes and other savory messes. Here is a prolific opportunity for economy. The left-overs that can thus be used save money galore. While the men and women whose palates or whose digestions turn against anything but the simple food must go to heavy expense in the way of procuring the "plain roast and broiled" that come higher than almost anything else.

With the purchase of provisions, after the rent and service and gas and fuel have been paid, cease the regular household expenses for which tolerably accurate estimate can be made. The cost of clothing, like that of outings, entertainments, gifts, and the like, including carfare, must come under the category of personal expenses. There remain, therefore, only such repairs and replacements as cannot be precisely figured up. For them it is well to have an emergency sum, and yet it is next to impossible to say what this shall be.

Once, a long while ago, I knew a young couple who began life on a very slender income. Every week a certain amount of this was set aside for the rent. Another fixed sum was made over to the wife for household expenses and service. Another proportion was put aside towards the

savings-bank, where it was to be kept against need that might arise in the line of clothing or doctors' bills or travelling expenses or anything else of the kind. And the balance—a very small balance—was put into a certain drawer where either husband or wife could go to it in case of any emergency.

Some such plan as this it is perhaps well to establish. What it shall be must be decided by circumstances. When a man is on a salary such disposition of the funds is simpler than when his income is uncertain. But positive or precarious, he and his wife should settle very definitely at the outset the sum beyond which they will not allow themselves to go for current expenses.

CHAPTER XI

GOING TO MARKET

THERE is as much art in buying the food for a household as there is in preparing it after it is bought.

Perhaps this statement should be modified in the case of those fortunate persons who do not have to consider dollars and cents when they go to market. Yet, after all, it may be a mistake to set them down as fortunate, without qualifying the term. From one point of view they may be lucky. They do not have to study ways and means and may pick and choose as they please, among the best of the market. But they are ignorant of the delights of economy. They do not know the delicious sense of making a good bargain and purchasing an inexpensive piece or article with the happy knowledge that judicious treatment will make it the equal of something that cost twice as much.

Such joys as these are hardly to be hoped for by the inexperienced young housekeeper. The two terms are usually synonymous. For although the majority of girls, in this day of increasing common-sense, may have taken lessons at cooking schools and even practised housekeeping in their mother's home, it is still the exception rather than the rule for the average girl to know much of marketing, unless in the most superficial fashion. So when she begins to buy her own meat and fish, vegetables and groceries, she is quite likely to be entirely at the mercy of the salesman and to have no positive knowledge to pit against his assertions of what will suit her and what will not.

Recently there have arisen certain wise women who have instituted marketing classes. The members of these go forth under the convoy of an instructor and by her are initiated into the mysteries of marketing. They are taught how to tell the difference between fresh meat and that which has gone too far past its first youth, to ascertain whether poultry is tough or tender, to discriminate between fish that is lately from the water and that which has been kept too long. More than this, they have the opportunity to

become learned in the matter of "cuts." Before they start out they have had an opportunity to study charts, showing the parts of the ordinary "beast of meat" eligible for the table, and then the Squeers method is followed. Having learned to spell it, so to speak, they are taught how to do it. In the market, the animal whose anatomy they have been considering is shown them, and the portions suited to certain needs indicated to them.

It is hard to think of a more practical course of lessons for the young woman who expects to have to do her own marketing. All the jokes which all the funny papers have perpetrated against the young woman who goes to market for the first time could hardly exaggerate the mistakes that unfortunate really makes. The joke about her demanding a leg of beef for Tuesday's dinner because she had a leg of lamb on Monday was probably first told about Mrs. Noah, and yet this year's bride makes it as cheerfully as did the one of pre-Deluge days.

There are other things she does that are less hackneyed but no less absurd. A certain young housekeeper of my own acquaintance had planned for an after-theatre supper for several friends—a

supper at which she was to show the skill she had acquired in her old home before her marriage, by cooking in the chafing-dish grilled sardines and lobster *à la* Newburg. She had ordered the necessary articles at the market and told her maid, a new acquisition, to put them on the table as soon as the party came in from the theatre.

When they trooped hungrily into the dining-room, the first sight that met their eyes was a large live lobster sprawling and squirming on the table. Beside him lay a box of sardines, unopened. The chafing-dish paraphernalia was all in order, for the hostess had arranged that before she left the house. Great was her wrath against the marketman.

"It is all his fault!" she declared. "I told him I wanted a pint of lobster meat and a dozen large sardines, drained from the oil and skinned. I was very particular to say it plainly, so that he would send them home all right."

It had not occurred to her that the marketman would not boil the lobster and take out the meat without express orders to that effect. Still less had she imagined that it was not just in his line to open the sardine can and prepare the sardines for cookery as she had always seen them in her

father's house. There it had been done by the servants, but the poor little housekeeper took it for granted that they were sent home in that way.

While, for the sake of the standard of general intelligence, it is to be hoped that there are not many young housekeepers who would make such blunders as this, there are other mistakes into which they can hardly fail to fall at first. How can the ordinary untrained girl tell the cuts of meat she ought to buy? What source of knowledge has she that will enable her to say that this or that article of fish or poultry or meat is or is not fresh or tender or suitable to the size of her family?

Practice alone will make her thoroughly skilled in these lines, but there is no reason that she should acquire all her information by the medium of her mistakes. The way is made plain for the student who will take pains. There are excellent manuals compiled that contain charts of the different animals sold in the markets and with these charts are full directions for ascertaining the different uses for which the different cuts may serve. Diligent study of these will do much to help the housekeeper to a practical as well as a theoretical acquaintance with marketing.

All the study must not be confined to books. The housekeeper must go to market and see things for herself. At first she should go altogether to a really good meat and fish merchant. There she will have a chance to become familiar with fish, meat, and poultry as they should be at their best, and may learn from this how to choose if she makes her purchases at a less high-toned establishment. There are plenty of these where she can do as well on provisions and much better on prices than at the absolutely first-class shops. Not that she should ever feel that there is any economy in buying an indifferent article of food. But many of the shops hold an exaggerated standard of prices, based partly upon a long-established reputation, partly upon an expensive location, partly, very often, upon the fact that they cater to a wealthy class of customers who do not take the trouble to compare prices but pay cheerfully whatever is asked them. Such dealers as these are to be avoided by the young housekeeper of moderate means. For awhile let her distribute her custom a little, until she has found some one who seems to satisfy her, for the time, at least. I say "for the time," because it is not wise to put permanent trust in marketmen. The best of

them become careless if they grow overconfident. The customer of whom they are perfectly sure does not receive the attention accorded the one who is likely to leave if the meat and the prices are not what they should be. It is never safe to let a butcher or a grocer feel that he can rejoice without trembling and take liberties with the custom or the convenience of any one who deals with him.

As I have said, it is experience that will do most to teach the beginner in marketing. Yet even from books she may learn that it is feasible to procure a small roast that will be palatable. This is a bit of information she is not likely to receive from her butcher. He would be more than man if he could rise superior to the chance of selling a large piece of meat instead of a small one, and ethics do not seem to flourish rankly in any branch of the meat business. The young housekeeper must learn for herself that she can buy a small porterhouse roast, not weighing more than four pounds or so, and that she can even get a rib roast of this size if she will have the bone taken out and the meat rolled into a neat round. This, too, should be done with the porterhouse roast and the bones sent home for soup. More

care is required in cooking so small a piece of meat as this than would be needed by a roast double the size, but it is worth while to take the trouble.

When it comes to buying lamb the same economy may be practised. The forequarter of lamb is as good as the hindquarter and much cheaper. The shoulder makes a roast, the chops may be cut off separately and broiled, the neck and breast are for stew and soup. If a leg is purchased chops can be cut from the upper part, while the lower portion answers for roasting. In the purchase of veal a similar method may be followed. With poultry it is a trifle different. There one gets either a fowl for stewing, or a full-grown chicken for roasting, or a young one for broiling or frying. The economy must be decided by the mode of cookery. With fish there is no possibility of getting a cheap cut. All one can do is to buy a cheap variety.

It is taken for granted that the young housekeeper shall herself go to market. This is a point upon which I believe all domestic economists agree. Few minor indulgences are more extravagant than marketing by telephone or sending the order by the butcher's or grocer's

boy. Not only is it more probable that the housekeeper will get what she wants when she selects it herself than when she leaves the choice to the merchant, but she is also pretty sure that her presence will make a difference in the amount of the bill. An overcharge or an underweight are less easily achieved with the customer standing by than in her absence.

Apart from this, there are other reasons why the housekeeper should go to market. She will find it very suggestive. There are many things to make a variety in the bill of fare that would never occur to her if she stayed at home but that are forced upon her attention by their appearance on the market stalls. Some persons claim that personal marketing, for this reason, leads to extravagance, as the sight of this or that tempts to purchases that would not otherwise be made. But one must learn to say no, in this line, as well as in others, and the advantages one reaps by going to market more than compensate for the drawbacks. It is no small good that it obliges a woman to go out of the house, generally while the day is yet young, and insures her getting a breath of fresh air to start the day on.

If more has been said of the choice of meat

foods than of vegetables, it is because the latter are easier to select. Little experience is required to judge if vegetables are fresh or withered. Even the larger, coarser varieties have a shrivelled aspect when they have begun to grow stale. So far as groceries are concerned, experience must be the teacher, but there is, in a way, comparatively small room for serious blunders. If butter is indifferent, if tea or coffee is not up to the mark, it is always possible to send back the unused portion and get another grade in its place. The young couple who begin housekeeping in a flat have no room for storing large supplies of food, and even if they did they would find it poor economy to purchase these.

Our modern mode of life in cities, where space is one of the most expensive of luxuries, is gradually forcing those of us constrained to a cockney existence out of our extravagant American fashion of living into a mode more in accordance with that followed by the French, the domestic economists *par excellence* of the world. It is impossible for the flat-dweller in New York, as in Paris, to lay in large supplies of provisions. He has not the place to put them. Being perforce obliged to buy in small quantities he—or his wife

—learns the economy that comes from dealing with such quantities. There seems a possibility that if we continue long enough dwelling in flats, we may lose some of the lavishness that has made our nation the laughing-stock of more prudent peoples. Like our Continental neighbors, we may let our provision dealers bear the loss that comes from goods that will not keep, and by purchasing a little at a time, insure that what we do purchase shall not spoil on our hands.

No chapter on marketing would be complete that did not touch on the question of paying cash for household supplies. This is, as a matter of course, by far the wisest plan. Its wisdom is another plea in favor of the housekeeping allowance. Without this, it is next to impossible to pay cash. By this time no one should need to have the arguments in favor of this mode of dealing repeated. In point of fact, so much has been said in its behalf that I feel constrained to take a brief for the system of weekly bills.

There is a good deal to be said for this plan. In the first place, as a labor-saving and time-saving contrivance. The hurried woman who can give her order or select her purchase and leave the shop without waiting for change knows

how to appreciate the weekly-bill system. In the second place it saves much confusion when it comes to figuring up domestic bills. There is no setting down of this and forgetting that, in the fashion familiar to those who keep a household expense book. At the end of the week come in the grocer's and the butcher's books, to speak for themselves.

The chief danger of such a method is that it may lead to carelessness in ordering or in paying. If these risks are guarded against and the housekeeper lets no temptation lead her to overrun her allowance or neglect to pay up at the week's end, there is no reason why she should not get what comfort she may from a system of weekly payments. Longer than that it is not wise to go, and every day the book should be scrutinized that its statements may be confirmed or contradicted while they are still fresh in the housekeeper's memory.

CHAPTER XII

PARTICULAR ECONOMIES

THERE are so many of these that when the housekeeper once gets started on them, there seems no end to them. I wish that it lay within the province of this work to launch forth into details on the matter,—to tell how to save here, and how to pinch wisely and well there, how to make one thing take the place of another in cookery, and how to convert this array of scraps into that dainty composition. But this is not a cook-book, and its rehearsal of economies must be confined to the most general of the particular variety.

Perhaps one of the first things on which the young housekeeper should study to economize is her own strength. This is something of which she usually seems to think she has a boundless supply. She makes limitless drafts upon it, and because for a while they are honored she jumps

to the conclusion that the store cannot be exhausted.

Women would save themselves much wear and tear if at the beginning they would give themselves part of the care that their overwrought constitutions demand from them later on. The Puritan conscience, that in its domestic aspects is one of our least precious inheritances, has its part in making a sin of anything that seems to render work and life simpler or easier. The woman who takes a seat to perform work that could be accomplished standing too often feels herself to be shirking duties and making her labors lighter than they should be. It is either this or a sort of inertia that is as bad which moves women to neglect the little ways in which they could save their strength.

From the very outset the young housekeeper is wise, no matter how robust she may be, if she tries to husband her strength. If she does her own work, she should have a comfortable chair at hand into which to drop while she is preparing vegetables or creaming butter and sugar for a cake or beating eggs or stirring mayonnaise. Should she be able to perch herself in a high chair while she washes or dries the dishes, so

much the better. There will always be plenty of things she cannot do except on her feet.

Another most sensible custom, even for the sturdiest young woman,—or middle-aged or old one either,—is the habit already advocated of taking a little afternoon rest.

And as valuable an economy as that of strength is the saving of time. The one may seem to contradict the other, but it does not. Women could save even more than mere time if they would bend their energies to systematizing their work so that they could accomplish more in a fixed period. Every housekeeper knows that there are no days so wearisome as those on which they have gone from one piece of work to another, leaving things at loose ends, never finishing one task before something else is begun, and closing the day with a general sensation of dropped stitches, ineffectual beginnings, and no endings at all.

The housekeeper's day should have a certain sequence in it beyond the arbitrary succession of various duties that must come at set times, like the preparation of meals. If an outline is made of such work it aids mightily in the accomplishment of all the numberless things that make up a

woman's day. By popular acceptance, her work is never done, although man's work ends with set of sun. But at least it may be ended in sections, so that there may come a breathing space between them. And this is something that the inconsequent housewife never knows.

When it comes to what may be called material economies there is no lack of them. They are to be found on every side and in many cases look so trifling that it seems hardly worth while to regard them. Yet if they could be lumped—or the amount saved by their practice could be lumped — they would make a sum total well worthy of respect.

The first one that presents itself to me is gas. Like every one else who knows the vagaries of a gas meter and has had experience of the peculiar fashion in which gas companies make out their bills, I speak of this particular economy with some hesitancy. In fancy I see a cloud of witnesses arising to bear testimony to the time when they were away from home for a month and no gas to speak of was burned and yet the gas bill was eight dollars, and of the other time when they had company most of the month and the gas blazing in every room and the bill was only five

fifty. Of the time when they got a gas-stove from a dealer and had a plumber make the connections, and burned it for months without the company knowing it and had no increase in bills, until one day when one of the gas company's inspectors happened in and spied the stove, when their bills instantly increased forty per cent.

We have all had these experiences or heard of them. Yet I cannot help believing that matches cost less than gas and that it is cheaper to turn the gas down or out when leaving a room than to pay for the increased gas that must tell the tale if it is left burning at full height. Lamps, too, save gas, to say nothing of the fact that they are, as a rule, pleasanter to read by and give a softer, more agreeable light in the room.

Another particular economy might well have been included in the preceding chapter, for it has to do with the buying of provisions. In the matter of purchasing meat all has been said that is requisite, but there is room for noticeable economy in groceries by those who will buy part of these at the department stores. Certain staples are perhaps no cheaper there than at the regular groceries, except when a feature is made of selling so many pounds of sugar or something of the sort

at a phenomenally low price. But when it comes to such fancy groceries as catsups, flavoring vinegars and sauces, fish pastes, prepared cocoas, gelatines, cleansing preparations for brasses and silver, and other things a little off the line of the every-day, commonplace, necessities-of-life supplies, there is a goodly amount to be saved by the woman who desires to lay in a stock of such things. It need not be a large stock, but of nearly all these articles the well-furnished pantry has generally one bottle or jar or box or parcel, and the difference saved by buying them at the cut-rate grocery section of a big department store instead of at the corner grocery is worth putting in one's pocket. Often the goods are of precisely the same make and may be bought at from twenty to forty per cent. less in the big shop than in the small one.

After all, the most important of the particular economies are to be practised in the kitchen. Here it is that the real wastes of the household take place, and to meet them only experience and vigilance will serve. The class from which we draw the majority of our domestic service does not incline to economy. They have rather a contempt for those who are obliged to practise it,

although they cherish respect for those who, having money enough, prefer saving it to spending it. A little diplomacy is well here. So long as economy is an eccentricity of wealth it may be seconded and it is well to place it in this category at the outset. Once in a while there is met a thrifty German maid who gives new ideas of economy even to one who has studied the science in this country. As a rule, the extravagance of the ordinary maid of all work springs from absolute inability to comprehend the meaning of the word economy.

When a new maid comes into the house, the mistress should begin at once to show her what is expected of her in this line. Nothing should ever be thrown away that could by any possibility be used,—and most things can find a use in the hands of the trained housekeeper. The half-cupful of soup that is left over may serve to make a sauce, the tablespoonful of cold vegetables may find place in a salad or a soup or a stew or a hash, the bones of the roast, whether cooked or uncooked, may be the foundation for a soup. Rightly viewed, there is no left-over but has its uses. Here in the pantry the housekeeper finds real scope for her practice of particular economies.

When the cooking is done by gas, a place for saving is plain. Unless the cook is an unusual maid the mistress will find it desirable to slip into the kitchen many times a day to make sure that the gas is not burning in the stove at a time when there is no need for it. If, on the other hand, coal is used for fuel, there is quite as much chance for economy. The average maid of all work knows no reason why she should not keep her stove full to the top and the coal inside at a red glow from morning until night. The mistress must be very firm in insisting that the coal shall not be piled higher than the top of the firebrick, that the lids shall be tipped or the draughts closed when the fire is simply being "kept in," and not used for cooking or for laundry work. Even when these are under way, the fire should not be allowed to come to the fierce heat which precedes the whitening of the coals. Before this point is reached a shovelful or so of fresh coal should be put on, to keep the fire going. If it is permitted to get too low before it is replenished, kindling wood will have to be employed to coax it back to usefulness.

Fuel is saved by keeping the kitchen fire in overnight, instead of letting it go out and build-

ing it fresh again the next morning. Late at night the cook should rake out the ashes, put on fresh coal, and after giving this ten or fifteen minutes in which to become fairly kindled, she should open the upper door of the stove and close the draughts. The next morning she should close the stove door and open the draughts the first thing, and after the coal begins to glow put on a little fresh coal and shake down the ashes. A fire may be kept in like this for several days at a time, although a longer period than a week should never elapse without letting the fire go out and cleaning the clinkers from the inside of the grate.

The most economical range coal is half white ash and half red ash. For a good-sized stove a small egg coal must be bought, while a nut coal is better for the very small ranges that usually come in very small flats. Whatever the coal, the ashes should always be sifted or picked over and the cinders saved to mix with fresh coal and put on the fire when it is burning strongly. They do not burn so readily or give so strong a heat as in their first estate, but they help keep the fire in and are of positive value in reducing the amount of coal used. In a home where the mistress of the

house does her own work, she must weigh one economy against another, and decide whether it is not perhaps less extravagance to pay for extra coal than to undertake for herself the rather unpleasant and tiresome duty of picking over the ashes.

There are a number of things which it is no economy to do without. The labor-saving appliances of all sorts, the carpet-sweeper, the egg-beater, the cream-churn, the meat-chopper, the liberal supply of such conveniences as sweeping sheets, dusting and scrubbing cloths, dish and china towels,—all these are needed aids, not luxuries. The purchase or manufacture of anything that will make the work of the house easier and, as it were, lighten by a feather's weight the load of human woe, should be reckoned among particular economies.

CHAPTER XIII

FORMING A CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

THE young couple who go to housekeeping in New York or in any other large city may esteem themselves uncommonly lucky if they have a circle of friends already made.

There are few things more doleful than to begin married life as strangers in a strange place. The new wife meant it when she assured the man she was to marry that his people should be her people, but she had never contemplated the possibility that he might not have any people. As this is her first experience in matrimony she may be pardoned for not appreciating how much better off she probably is than if he had a good-sized family connection, all living within a few blocks of the freshly furnished flat.

Rarely does it happen that two persons set up their household gods in a town where they are utter strangers. They may be far from their

former home, but usually they have a few affiliations that bring them in touch with some one. The husband has business acquaintances, and it may be that the wives of some of these will be moved by compassion and call on the young wife. More kindliness is at large in human nature than pessimists believe and all women are interested in a newly married couple. Possibly the young people have one or two friends who come to see them and bring others. If this is not the case steps should be taken at an early day to make acquaintances who may one day be friends.

Aside from the pleasure they will have in such association, it is a salutary thing for a married pair to have friends outside of their home. Thomas Hardy has told us that since there is just so much happiness in any dual solitude the joy will last longer if it is taken in homœopathic doses, instead of all being used in one orgy of bliss. To support this theory, he instances the case of Eustacia Vye and Clym Yeobright, in *The Return of the Native*, who rashly secluded themselves in a lonely cottage on Egdon Heath, where they saw only each other.

Without accepting this idea unreservedly, there can be no doubt that two persons get along more

happily together if they are not entirely confined to the society of one another. It may be on the principle that one never appreciates home so much as after having been away from it for a while. At any rate, the young couple will almost always be benefited by contact with friends.

There are several ways to set about forming a circle of acquaintances. Beside the possibility already referred to, that a newly mated pair may have a few friends who will serve as a nucleus for others, and the chance of the persons who may be met through the husband's business associates, there is the means of letters of introduction. These may almost always be procured without difficulty. Friends in other places will write to friends in the new home, requesting them to call and show little neighborly attentions. If the woman has been a member of a club in her home city or town, she has the way open to her for pleasant associations. In the present federated condition of women's clubs, she can be introduced to other women who will at once make her feel that she has a place of her own in their circle.

Once granted an introduction of this kind, the path is comparatively plain. With the entrance

into a club comes the chance to join classes in different lines of study and these offer some of the best opportunities for making congenial friends. The persons who belong to the same classes are naturally interested in the same things and in the informality of discussing a subject of common interest women often learn to know one another better in a few months than they would by years of ordinary social intercourse. Classes of this sort, courses of lectures, and the like are plenty.

Still another way of making friends is open to churchgoers. Not that mere attendance upon religious services will insure the acquisition of friends. In a large place like New York there is little of the churchly neighborliness that prevails in smaller places. The loneliness of a city street is often paralleled by the loneliness of a city church.

While one may go to the same church and sit in the same seat for months or years without receiving a word of greeting from any one met in the aisles, the clergyman is pretty sure to show hospitality to any one whose name he receives. He will call himself and send his wife—if he has one. He will do more than that. He will sug-

gest to some of the women active in the church that they should go and welcome the stranger, and if she is interested in church work and willing to bear her share in it she will probably in a very short time find herself in the midst of a pleasant little circle of acquaintances.

Here is the place for some one to say, "But is it not possible to make friends with the families living in the same apartment house?"

If there is one piece of advice one is justified in putting into the form of firm admonition it is this —Do not make friends of the other people in the house!

This does not mean that one may not be on kindly terms with them. It does not mean that it is not often a desirable and delightful thing to take an apartment in the house where one already has friends living. But it is a great mistake to drift into an intimacy of propinquity. Such an intimacy is fatally easy for the young wife who has no older friends at hand and feels a natural desire for one of her own sex to whom to turn during the many hours she must spend without her husband. Once in a while such an acquaintance is made which in time ripens into a pleasant friendship. But it is a good deal of a risk to

contract it hastily. It is very much easier to get into a running-in-and-borrowing intimacy than it is to get out of it. From such a relation one cannot recede without producing hard feeling. And the fact that a woman is a kindly neighbor, as prompt to lend as to borrow and prodigal of offers of cordial offices and good turns, does not mean that she is the person to whom one would give the freedom of the home and upon whom one would rely as a close friend and confidante. Many a chance relationship of this sort that has at first been most welcome to a lonely little woman has later on, on better acquaintance, turned out to be an undesirable association from which it is all but impossible to be released peaceably.

If I dwell upon this with a good deal of insistence it is because I have known of many cases where these chance friendships have ripened into unmitigated bores. They all begin in pretty much the same way. There is a common grievance against the janitor or the milkman or the man who brings ice. A few words are exchanged across the dumbwaiter shaft, or the newcomer into the apartment goes to the door of her next neighbor to ask for information on some point she does not understand. In spite of the

cry that American women are worked to death and live in a constant rush that is wearing them all into nervous prostration, it is noticeable that there is always a large section of the community who have time to "run in" and sit and chat,—a chat that degenerates into gossip without the least difficulty. It is not of necessity ill-natured gossip. And it is extremely entertaining to the woman who spends most of her days in solitude and who has little work to do. So she falls into the habit of going into her neighbor's or urging her neighbor to come into her house, and the intimacy is established.

That is an old story of the camel who asked permission to put his nose into the Arab's tent and ended by bringing in his whole body and forcing the owner of the tent to go outside. But the fable is illustrated every day. The women who used to live in separate houses and gossip over the back fence are now at closer quarters and intimacy is correspondingly easier. There are so few persons in the world whom one would choose for close friends that there is a carelessness which is foolhardy in taking the risk of permitting a stranger to get a foothold in one's home simply on the ground of paying rent to the same

landlord and being in subjection to the same janitor. The oneness of misfortune may be provocative of sympathetic feeling but it should not lead to a sisterliness that may not endure.

The same caution may in a measure be applied to all new friendships made by a couple of people who come to a place as strangers. One may flatter oneself upon choosing friends for qualities that will wear, but the wearing qualities do not declare themselves except after having undergone the test of time.

A caution like this sounds a hard saying, but it proves itself. Young people almost always think themselves good judges of character. Those who have relied upon their discernment to their own hurt have arrived at the point of scepticism where they wonder if any one can ever know anything about any one else. It takes a good many bitter lessons before they reach this stage and the wisdom they have gained does not bring much happiness with it. One of the hardest parts of the whole matter is that it is only a rather generous, confiding sort of person who trusts and is deceived and that the severity of the lesson is usually in proportion to the openness of spirit that, believing in others, has poured forth

imprudent confidences to a hearer who was unworthy of trust.

It is not necessary, however, to make such confidences in order to establish friendly relations. Kindliness, neighborliness, even a certain measure of hospitality is possible without telling the comparative stranger the story of one's life or the amount of one's income.

CHAPTER XIV

THE PLEASANT ART OF ENTERTAINING

ONE of the first impulses of the newly settled young couple is toward hospitality. The man has a pride in possessing the happiest home and the most charming wife in the universe and naturally desires to compel his neighbors to come in and rejoice with him. The wife is even more positive of the perfection of the husband than he is of the charms of the wife. Her pride in her home is probably not second to his, although she may be clever about concealing it. The naïveté of a woman can never equal that of a man.

Whether hidden or obvious, the joy and pride are there, and the desire to invite their friends is the natural expression thereof. The only point to be decided is the form the hospitality shall take. Its expression will be determined partly by tradition and partly by income.

If I put tradition first, it is because I consider

it the more important factor. Students of human nature will gain not a little wisdom and even more amusement from watching the way in which early training and habit display themselves years after both of these have become things of the past. The man and woman who have always been used to keeping open house will exercise free hospitality in a home of their own, no matter how limited their means. They will at least share what they have with the guest. On the other hand, those who have looked upon company as a state function to be discharged once in so often and never taken into calculation between times will continue to make it a rare and formal affair, no matter to what wealth they may attain.

The simple and unassuming style of entertaining is the only one to which young people of moderate means should aspire. There is no sense in their attempting the feat described at the South as "putting the big pot in the little one." It is only pretension that is vulgar and ridiculous. When a host and hostess invite their friends to come to them and share their best there is no room for criticism, no matter how simple that best may be.

The kind of entertaining one may do in a flat

is usually settled by the space. One cannot expect to give large dinners in a dining-room which will not permit of putting more than two leaves in the table, or hope to have an elaborate evening company in a drawing-room holding only five seats besides the divan. The size of their quarters is a boon to entertainers of limited means, in that it obliges them to receive in a fashion in harmony with their income and their accommodations.

The young couple given to hospitality will do well to decide upon some one especial line of entertaining and stick pretty closely to that. Let them make it characteristic of them and their surroundings and not be tempted to deflect from the way they have chosen. There is a variety of such ways of entertaining, and each has its advantages. The drawbacks that are also there will present themselves to each hostess. What may be a recommendation to one might be a hindrance to another.

The chief trouble in all entertaining is usually found in the domestic service. Once in a while one is fortunate enough to find a servant who does not object to company, and who perhaps even enjoys it. The mistress of that maid may

offer a sacrifice at the shrine of good luck. The lines have fallen unto her in pleasant places. Most housekeepers find their hospitality hampered by the necessity of placating "the girl," when a friend is invited to break bread.

The prudent mistress has made provision for this at the start and told the servant, in engaging her, that company would be a frequent occurrence. Having guarded this point, the mistress should do her part towards keeping peace in the family by considering the servant. An extra guest should not be invited when there is a big washing or ironing on hand or when an unusual piece of cleaning has been undertaken. If the entertaining is conducted on a rather lavish scale, involving much washing of dishes, an extra helper should be engaged for the occasion. In any event the smaller preparations should be made by the mistress. The arrangement of china and napery, the cookery of the little fussy delicacies, the laying of the table, in part the putting to rights afterwards, should all be the work of the hostess.

A great deal of the extra care that is put upon servants and that has its effect in making them discontented and eager for a change is due to

carelessness or positive selfishness on the part of the master and mistress of the house. It is not much of a burden to them, when the impromptu after-theatre supper has been eaten, to gather up the remnants of the feast, putting the food that is left back where it belongs and piling the soiled dishes in the kitchen sink. It is very little trouble to them to pull back into place the chairs that have been disarranged in the drawing-room, to shake out and "plump up" the couch cushions, to empty the cigar ashes and restore the room to tolerable order. But it is a discouragement to the maid who has gone to bed leaving the house in good order to arise the next morning to chaos and find she must put in half an hour straightening things out before she can attack her regular work. Especially is it trying if the orgy has taken place, as such orgies often do, on Sunday night, and she is painfully conscious of the tub of clothes she had meant to rub out before breakfast, while she hurries about trying to get the house into decent shape.

These are trifles, perhaps, but they are trifles that must be reckoned with if one wishes to entertain in comfort and keep servants. In fact, the former is rather contingent upon the latter. So

let the mistress resolve that whatever may be the form of entertaining she has chosen as peculiarly her own, she will not permit the heaviest part of it to fall upon the shoulders of her maid of all work.

Afternoon tea is probably the simplest fashion in which to exercise hospitality. Pretty cups and saucers are among the possessions of which the young housekeeper has a generous store, and they will make an attractive array on her afternoon tea table. They may be taken in there early in the afternoon of the day she expects her friends, instead of being brought in on a tray, with the rest of the tea equipage, in the manner followed when she is alone or when there is a chance guest. For the latter, tea biscuit of any sort or thin bread and butter, even without cake, would serve, but for the premeditated company she should have sandwiches and something sweet,—a small loaf cake or cookies or sand tarts or macaroons.

For such a tea as this, tea alone is needed as a beverage,—tea with cream and tea with lemon as well, and perhaps a little flask of rum, besides. If the hostess decides to make a special feature of her teas, she may select some one thing which she always serves and she should be able to flatter

herself that it is a little better than anything of the same sort one could get anywhere else. Perhaps it may be some particular kind of sandwich or of cake or of shortbread. Perhaps it may be hot buttered toast, or anchovy toast, or some other dainty of the sort. Whatever it is, it should be perfect in its way.

One objection to which the afternoon tea is open—an objection which can hardly fail to carry weight with a bride—is that it is essentially a woman's function. Business hours keep the master of the house from taking part in it. The tea is all very well when one desires only a "hen party," but when the masculine element is craved, hospitality must take some other form. Once in a while the new wife may ask her women friends to come and take a cup of tea with her or to gather in small numbers around the table in her dining room for a "jam tea," but she must cultivate some other sort of entertainment as well and make it one in which her husband can take part.

There are plenty of little parties besides tea that do not come high. One of the best of these is the Sunday night supper. This may readily be made a very informal and pleasant affair. Here the chafing-dish will have the post of honor and

the young hostess should make new dishes her study. Never should she be so ambitious as to try a new dish for the first time before a company gathering. Private practice should always precede the public appearance.

One of the charms of the Sunday night supper is that it demands very little waiting from the maid. The host and the guests do the serving, and there is no necessity for the formal order that would be essential at a dinner. The food, too, can most of it be ready in advance. It is an occasion for cold meats and aspic and *chaudsfroids* and salads and cold sweets. There may be hot bread, but one does very well without it. Boston brown bread and baked beans may be warm, if one craves these delicacies, but thin bread and butter or French rolls answer as well. The hot features are furnished by the contents of the chafing-dish and of the coffee-pot. In some houses where a Welsh rarebit is a Sunday-nightly transgression, even the coffee is dispensed with and ice-cold beer reigns in its stead.

Somewhat on the order of the Sunday night supper is the late-at-night spread. This is best in a family who have the habit of some club or other association which meets once in so often and

whose deliberations are concluded—and atoned for—by a feast to follow. The character of the assembly will be determined by the tastes of its members. It may be a card party or a ping-pong club or an association upon music intent or pursuing some line of reading or of study. The nature of the amusement or of the research has nothing to do with the supper. This, too, may make the chafing-dish its most important feature, and the style of provision made will resemble that chosen for a Sunday night tea.

Some ambitious housewives aspire to nothing less than to a reputation for their dinners. It is a high ideal, but it is one that requires hard work, as, indeed, living up to an ideal generally does. The hostess should count the cost before she undertakes the contract.

Properly managed, the little dinner is the most delightful way of entertaining a few choice spirits. They cannot be invited recklessly, as they would be asked to an evening "crush" or even to an afternoon tea. The right sort of persons must gather about the dinner table if the feast is to be a success.

The guests should be selected before the menu. The bill of company is a more important matter

than the bill of fare. Yet that must not be looked upon as a trifle. The dishes of which it consists must be carefully chosen, that they may not interfere with the comfort of each other or of the eater. The requirements of gastronomic morality are never more strenuous than at a dinner. Moreover, the dishes must not be so elaborate that the hostess must wear herself out beforehand getting them ready, or be tortured all the while by the dread that they may come on the table in a condition that permits criticism. Still another consideration must be reckoned with,—the expense. It is an easy matter to give a dinner when money is no object. But there is not the triumph in that which lies in giving a good dinner when the money supply for it is slender.

The hostess addicted to little dinners must turn her back resolutely upon extravagance, to begin with. She must resolve to confine herself to a few courses and to make her repasts remarkable more for the excellence of the articles she has, the way in which they are prepared, and the perfection with which they are served than for their rarity or expensiveness. Any millionaire can buy game and vegetables and fruit out of season and hire a chef to prepare them and trained

domestics to serve them. A much higher order of thought and labor is required to make an attractive dinner out of the funds and the service at the command of the average young housekeeper.

So let her understand very clearly what she is going in for before she undertakes to give dinners. It means hard thinking and hard work. But it means also a goodly amount of justifiable pride. The woman who can, with only such a moderate household force as is commanded by the dweller in city tents, carry through a successful company dinner, even on a small scale, is not guilty of conceit when she claims a blue ribbon.

There are other ways of exercising hospitality besides those which I have named, but all of them are open to one objection or another. The breakfast party is a charming fashion of entertaining a few friends, but it is hard to secure men for this, unless one's lot is thrown among professional men. The luncheon is a delightful, if rather costly method of entertaining, but from this, as from the tea, men are usually banished. I have known of one or two women who entertained little in the winter, but made a specialty of their delightful picnics to out-of-town spots in the warm weather.

Whatever shape the hospitality may take, it should never be permitted to become a burden. There are enough fardels no young people can escape. Here is one they need not bind upon themselves. They should make up their minds at the beginning what they can afford to spend upon entertaining their friends, and not yield to the temptation to be generous beyond their means. It is a very natural and gracious temptation, but the punishment, in the form of bills and the bother of them, is as severe as if it had been incurred by some mean and sordid vice.

CHAPTER XV

THE PROBLEM OF CLOTHES

DURING the first few months of married life the question of the sum to be set aside for clothing seems a matter of comparative unimportance. Both wife and husband are probably well supplied with everything that is really needed and the expenditure for the wardrobe is limited to trifles. Such tempering of the wind is the more grateful at this juncture because there are so many other pulls upon the purse. Furnishing, moving, settling, all come high, and it would be hard to get along if the cost of raiment were added to these.

The day comes soon enough when the new clothes grow shabby and must be replaced or remodelled. The husband and wife should not have waited until then to decide upon what they can afford to put aside for such purposes. When they once begin to make computations on the

subject, they will feel that all the thought they gave to rent, household allowance, and that sort of thing was plain sailing compared with this. The cost of living is in a measure a fixed quantity. When it diverges it is in a way that may be reckoned upon. But what one shall eat and drink sinks into insignificance when one begins to figure upon wherewithal one shall be clothed.

For sundry reasons the question of what the man's clothing shall cost is more easily fixed than the decision as to what shall be appropriated for the woman's wardrobe. A man knows pretty well how long underwear will last, what he should pay for a suit of clothes, how many hats and pairs of shoes he will be likely to need in the course of the year. He may nobly resolve to restrain himself in the line of neckties and fancy waistcoats and so may bring his probable expenditures within a sum he can mention.

With his wife it is a different thing. In the matter of underclothing and shoes she may perhaps be able to make a decisive estimate, knowing, if she is skilful with her needle, that she can atone for the greater cost of her underclothing over that the man wears by making certain articles herself. But she is hampered in her

economies by the very nature of a woman's dress. Her husband had a new dress suit when he married, and unless he goes in more heavily for style than the income of the average non-society young man warrants, he will not need to replace it for several years. His wife's wedding gown will do her no such good turn as that. It was supplemented by other gowns that serve for evening wear, but these, too, grow an old story in time, and although they can be made over, this process is a good deal of an expense unless it is done by the wearer's own hands. The clever woman can make one new gown from two old ones, but this, too, cannot be done without expense.

When it comes to clothing for street wear the same inequality prevails between the man and the woman. He is an extravagant person who cannot make his business suit do for two years running, and many a man can point with pride to a suit or an overcoat that he has worn much longer than this. His wife may perhaps imitate him in part when it comes to tailor-made costumes, but the confections of the dressmaker do not stand such long wear and cost a good deal more in the first place. So, too, with a woman's bonnets. If she is skilled with her fingers, she

may trim them herself, and flatter herself that they look as if they had been done by a professional, but the materials for such creations are not to be had for the asking and their cost cuts into the sum she had laid aside for extras. Her shoes may be less expensive at first than her husband's, but they do not wear so long, and she must have pretty house slippers as well as street and calling boots. Her gloves are no small item if she wishes to look neat, and when it comes to the matter of neck-gear, she beats her husband on his own ground in the amount she may put into stocks and collars and ties.

In spite of all this, she must make some estimate of what her clothing ought to average during the year. If she has had an allowance in her girl days she is in a better position to judge the matter. If not, she will have to make some very careful computations, with the aid of the bills for her clothing before she was married. If she takes out the contents of her closet and bureau drawers and reckons up their probable cost, she will lay herself open to an attack of heart failure. Yet this is not such an alarming experience when she recollects that she has all these things to the good and that, providentially, they will not all wear

out at once. They will be replaced one at a time, when they have reached the end of their period of usefulness, so that she will not have to bear the shock of getting an entire new stock at one time.

The cost of any woman's wardrobe is determined chiefly by the way in which she lives. The woman who begins housekeeping in the same town where she has long had her home, and intends to keep up with the gay set in which she has hitherto moved, will have much more occasion, naturally, for an elaborate wardrobe than the woman who goes little into general society. From motives of economy, New York is in some respects better than a smaller place, where every one knows every one else, and is acquainted with every detail of her neighbor's wardrobe. Even in New York the woman who tries to keep up with the social procession must either resign herself to wearing her clothes long after she has wearied of them or else pay a good deal of her own or her husband's income for *chiffons*.

The woman who lives quietly and does not care for gay society has a comparatively easy time of dressing herself. Not for her are the agonies of mind of the woman who has the reputation for

dressing well and lives up to it. The latter may be in bondage to dressmakers, but the woman who dresses simply gives her chief custom to a tailor. She gets a good tailor-made gown in the fall and it does her for best all winter and for nearly best a second season. In the spring she may get herself another tailor gown of a lighter weight or she may have a skirt made and buy herself a little jacket that will last for two or three summers. A short skirt she will have as well and she will live and move and have her being in shirt-waists. It is a matter for which she should return devout thanks if she is of a figure to look well in them.

Besides the tailor-made clothes, this woman will have a pretty skirt that will do for house wear and two or three waists that are more or less dressy. One of these may be a low-neck dinner waist and another may be something suitable for an afternoon tea or the theatre. In summer, she will probably make for herself the little wash-gowns she needs and she will doubtless be handy enough to fashion some of her shirt-waists. She, too, is perhaps of those who trim their own hats or have other skilful ways of getting them at less than the highest cost.

The woman who studies ways and means in acquiring her wardrobe learns many little money-saving tricks. One of the best of these is buying out of season. No one needs to be told that the "first run" of any material or article of wearing apparel is the dearest. Upon this fact the foresighted woman banks. Her plans are so made that she avoids buying her spring gown in the first flush and fluff of the fashion and she postpones getting her new winter coat and furs until after the first of January. In hats, too, she has her mode of making economies. Late in the summer or winter she buys the hat that has been marked down to about half its original price. For the rest of that season she cherishes it carefully and wears it only on grand occasions. When the next season opens she has her hat ready for it, and if she has been wise in buying, and selected something that is not so bizarre as to be left behind in the progress of styles, she is fitted out until it is late enough in the season for her to buy another head-covering at an advantage.

Nearly all clothing can be purchased by this method. Men call women extravagant, but it is their very passion for economy that makes them seek bargains and haunt the sales of these. Any

normal woman has far more joy in a hat or jacket she has bought under the conditions I have just described than in one she has purchased at the highest market price.

All things being equal, it is not the worst privation in the world for a woman to carry a light stock of clothing of all kinds,—that is, for the woman who goes little into general society. The woman who has a large supply of wearing apparel must often mourn that her lot is cast in a flat. There is so little space there for clothes that one feels as though the architects had contemplated the apartments being tenanted by a race of ballet dancers.

Some flats have adequate closet space, but these are lamentably few. One good closet allowed for a woman and her husband—speaking in the order of the extent of their probable wardrobes—is hardly sufficient for any but persons who dress simply. The every-day clothes may hang there, but there must be found another place for the best garments.

"What a charming idea!" said a young woman not long ago, reading an account of a recent trousseau. "'The bride's gown came in a large white box with her initials on it in silver. The box was

made for this purpose and will serve not only to hold the gown now, but will make a charming family souvenir.' Now, would n't it be nice if our mothers or grandmothers had left us a thing like that!"

"Yes," said her fellow flat-dweller, reflectively, "it would have been lovely. We could keep it under the bed!"

That is where the best clothes of many a flat family are kept. There is no other place for them. There go the bandbox with the theatre bonnet, the evening gown in its *carton*, the fur cape. She is a lucky woman who has one of her couches or divans built in box form so that she can have a place for her thin frocks. If she has once cut down her belongings so that there is space for them in the closet and she does not have to go down on her hands and knees for the garments wherewith to make a dressy toilet, she may declare fervently, "Blessed be nothing!"

The whole matter of suggesting what a woman shall do about her clothes is the more difficult because it is impossible to lay down fixed principles that will govern or guide every woman. After all, it depends upon the individual woman what her wardrobe will cost, and general advice is all

one can give. And again, it depends upon the individual woman whether or not she will take it.

One of the most valuable lessons to be learned by the woman who must be pretty closely limited in the amount of money she can spend upon her outfit is the art of choice. In a large city, with attractive shops, it is much harder to decide what not to get than what to select. The average woman sees a pretty garment in a style that she knows would suit her, and she straightway buys it without a thought of how it will go with the rest of her wardrobe. She finds a hat that is becoming, pretty, good style, and good material. Forthwith she purchases it and never thinks until she gets it home that it is utterly unsuitable to wear with the street costume she had expected to live in the whole season. Or she gets a wrap that is charming with one gown and impossible with every other.

The woman of moderate means should learn to buy her different articles of clothing so that they will dovetail into each other. Every one should be chosen with the thought of every other one with which it will have to associate. Such choice will require careful study and there are some women who never learn the knack of it. To the

end of their days they go on buying things simply because they are pretty or serviceable or becoming, and with no thought of their future comrades.

Another point to be studied by the woman of small means in buying her wardrobe is inconspicuousness. The woman who can throw aside a gown or a bonnet as soon as she wearies of it can indulge in brilliant colors and striking combinations. Not so the woman who must wear a gown for a long time. Before her conscience will permit her to throw it away she will be sick and tired of the striking effect that so pleased her at first. Extremes in modes are to be deprecated as much as garishness of color. The gown of unusual cut and salient tints will please the eye at first. Before it is worn out the wearer who must make her clothes last a long time will be a trial to the eyes of her friends and a mortification to herself.

A number of little economies have already been touched upon. The woman who understands sewing has an unspeakable advantage over the woman who does not. Often one can find a little dressmaker who will come to the house by the day, and who is possessed of veritable talent for cutting, fitting, and planning. The woman who

can sew with her will achieve wonders out of the compass of her sister who thinks it impossible to have a gown that is not from the hands of a high-priced dressmaker with an establishment.

From the problems connected with a man's wardrobe, a mere woman may well shrink in respectful awe. Here is something with which she may not intermeddle. He would not thank her for counsel, and she could not give it if he wanted it never so badly. A man has the decided advantage over his wife when making computations on clothing, because he has probably paid for his own for years and has a pretty clear idea of what his wardrobe will cost. This superiority may, it is hoped, have the effect of making him lenient with her sins, negligences, and ignorances when it comes to making an estimate as to what her clothes should cost her in the course of the year.

CHAPTER XVI

WHERE TO GO FOR DINNER

PLANNING what to have for dinner is one of the joys that soon pall. For a while it is very charming to the young housekeeper to devise bills of fare, and if she is obliged to economize, the pleasure is heightened by the fun of making a little as good as a feast, by the aid of sense and seasoning. Never does she really tire, probably, of consulting what she knows to be her husband's preferences in the matter of food and selecting such things as she knows will please him.

There are some exceptional housewives who declare they have never known ennui in making up their minds what is to be served at three meals a day. There are many more who are familiar with the sensation of positive physical nausea that arises when the time comes about for the daily decision as to what shall be for dinner, and

who echo in thought, if not in word, the longing of the young housekeeper that some one would invent a new animal.

To such as these the thought of eating food at a table other than their own, of coming to each item of the meal as a surprise is a more potent appetizer than any drug in the market. The woman who lives near her home after her marriage can always "go home to mother" for a meal or two, but the wife who has settled in a strange place has no such way of escape open to her from the tiresome round of dinners she herself has planned. When she hungers for a change the restaurant dinner is the avenue of escape that presents itself. Her husband relishes the little change no less than she does. He is not so likely to weary of the home menu as she, since to him the items of each meal are probably unknown until he sees them arrayed before him. But he likes the little excitement of going out to dine, and, being a good fellow, he rejoices that his wife should have the recreation. Should she be her own maid of all work as well as housekeeper the change means more to her than he can understand.

In a place like New York, there is happily a

chance to indulge in the diversion of dining out without going to an expense that makes one feel it necessary to forego a repetition of the luxury for weeks after. But to dine well and cheaply one must turn aside from the beaten path of the *restaurant de luxe*. In Paris it is perhaps possible to pay more for a dinner than in New York. When one gets into the places where there are no prices on the bill of fare it is time to draw a long breath, loosen the purse-strings and resolve to eat and drink even if to-morrow you will be unable to pay your board bill. Here in New York the most lavish caterers have at least the grace to let you know to what extent you are imperilling your fortune.

It is with no such establishments as these that the young diners-out of moderate means have to do. And it may be doubted if even in Paris, where extremes meet, one can dine much more cheaply than here in New York. It will be a good dinner, too, not made up, as the cynical aver, from the leavings of hotels and high-priced restaurants, but from good food, bought fresh from the markets by the proprietors, and having known no other appearance on any other board until it is served to the guest of the modest *table d'hôte*.

All these places are *tables d'hôte*. We have nothing here that corresponds to the Parisian *crêmerie* or to the cheap and good restaurants that may be found on the left bank of the Seine, where one may order what one will and fare sumptuously within the limits of a five-franc piece. When that sort of thing is attempted here it degenerates speedily into a cheap lunch resort, where the leisure which should attend upon eating that is not mere stoking is utterly lacking. But we do have the little *table d'hôte* places, and there at least, leisure is to be found. Your French or Italian caterer is not to be rushed in the sequence of courses, and unless one does violence to the whole spirit of most of these places, one is tolerably sure, perforce, to have dinner decently and in order.

For most of the *table d'hôte* places are run by French or Italians. The unfortunate American who has never had his taste for cosmopolitan cookery cultivated and whose gastronomic yearning are all for pies "like mother used to make" and similar delicacies, has a hard time coming when he seats himself at a *table d'hôte* dinner. Still, if he has an open mind and a desire to learn, he will soon form the *table d'hôte* habit and take

his course dinner of samples as cheerfully and with as much relish as the guests who have had early advantages.

The general outline of the *table d'hôte* dinner is always pretty much the same, and the man who goes to a place where it comes high, in the fond delusion that he will find something different, is doomed to disappointment. There may be a larger provision of each article, there will be one or two more *entrées*, and the sweet will be more elaborate, while there will be more "frills" in the way of table service. But he will probably have as much as he can eat at the cheaper meal and if he chooses his dining place wisely, he will have no reason to complain of the excellence of the cookery.

There are several pretty clearly defined *table d'hôte* districts in New York, and their *habitués* soon learn to know them tolerably well. In the neighborhood of the Tenderloin they abound. On the streets above Twenty-third Street, running east from Broadway, they especially flock. Some of these places are by no means the sort of establishments to which a man would wish to take his wife. But there are plenty of the other sort, quiet, respectable little restaurants, where one is

pretty sure to see a goodly number of French *bourgeois* side by side with clerks of moderate salaries who can dine here for fifty or sixty or seventy-five cents. When it comes to the last, it is high-priced for this neighborhood and one has a right to expect many things. Whether he gets them or not is another matter.

At some of these dinners wine is included in the price asked. The wine is naturally not of a very choice vintage. It probably came from California by way of a bottling warehouse where it received the *cachet* of a foreign label. It may not, like the wine of Du Maurier, make beautiful blue stains on the tablecloth,—although even this variety of wine may be found in New York,—but when it is spilled the mark it leaves is not of so deep a hue as to convince one that the contents of the bottle were the pure juice of the grape. Whatever it is, it is harmless, and it would take something besides this sort of thing to reduce the ordinary man or woman to intoxication.

Another *table d'hôte* district is farther south. One travels below Fourteenth Street for it and the out-of-town people who go there imagine that they are entering Bohemia. The belief gives them so much simple joy that it would be a shame to

destroy it. And it is a fact that at some of these *table d'hôte* resorts, as also at those farther uptown, one may occasionally see a live poet, enjoying his dinner with a zest that gives an awful blow to the preconceived notions of the young ladies from Kalamazoo. One may also catch glimpses of artists, illustrators, writers, newspaper men, and other great personages, looking so humiliatingly like ordinary mortals that one feels it is hardly worth while to be famous if that is the best appearance one can make.

The main thing is not the persons who eat the food but the food itself. And this is usually very good. The prices down here run from forty to seventy-five cents for the dinner, and here, too, wine is sometimes included and sometimes not. The service and cookery are generally satisfactory. In some of these places there is an outdoor dining-room. In other words, the dinner is served in the back yard, which has been adorned for the purpose and where one has, like David Copperfield, a fine view of over the way. In summer, when these places are open, enough of the residents of the adjoining houses have moved away to save one from the sensation of imitating royalty and dining in the presence of the multitude.

Over on the East side, too, in the vicinity of Union Square, there are *table d'hôte* places. More still are to be found far downtown, in the business districts. These are patronized chiefly by men who are detained late at their offices and dinner is seldom served there after six-thirty or seven. In fact, at any of such resorts it is well to get in early, if a really good dinner is hoped for. First come, first served, applies here as well as at more expensive restaurants.

I have no intention of limiting the haunt of the *table d'hôte* dinner to any few sections. To use a slang phrase, the woods are full of them. Some of the best are doubtless still blushing unseen and waiting to be discovered. One of these days a lucky traveller in Bohemia will find them and will lack the reserve to keep their places and their specialties a secret. At first he will confide in a few chosen friends. They, in turn, will tell others, and it will be like an endless chain. The place will become the vogue, seekers for novelty will crowd in and spoil it and the lover of quaintness and comparative solitude will once more have to move on.

There is a prevalent impression that in New York can be found any variety of national cookery

with the same distinctive flavor it possesses on its native soil. This is a conviction cherished by a good many persons who live out of New York and by newcomers, and they hold fast to it until they go to look for the national *cuisines* of their faith. Then they learn their mistake.

Italian, French, and German cookery can be found without difficulty. There are two or three restaurants that call themselves Hungarian, chiefly on the strength of a gypsy band that plays rag-time music and coon songs. Their wines also bear names made up principally of consonants. A tradition exists that once upon a time they were really distinctively national. But they were discovered, the crowd rushed in, and the national aroma was lost. They are still good restaurants, but they are no more Hungarian than they are Egyptian.

There is a Chinese restaurant in Chinatown, and that still holds its own character unchanged. A Spanish restaurant is said to be in existence, likewise a Mexican, where can be purchased *frijoles*, *tortillas*, and *tomales* as on their native heath. But these rumors are difficult to track down.

There are undoubtedly places in New York

where one can get national cookery,—Russian, Syrian, Roumanian, Greek, and almost any other kind in its habit as it lived, so to speak. But these places lie outside the beaten path and few there be that find them. When they do trace them out, it is doubtful if they think it worth while to repeat the experience. For the persons who frequent these places are of the poorest classes of the cities and the resorts where they find their food are out of the way, cheap, and dirty. They may suit those who have known the same sort of thing in their homes overseas, but such customers are of the working classes there, and the cookery that suits them, the surroundings with which they are satisfied, would be intolerable to persons with higher ideals of comfort or of cleanliness. French cookery galore may be found, there are places where Italian *fritella* and *risotto*, to say nothing of macaroni, may be found cooked as in Venice or Florence or Naples, and there are those where the sauerkraut and sausages rival those of Nürnberg; but for other distinctive national cookery one must generally look in vain.

If I have dwelt at length upon the *table d'hôte* it is because this is the best fashion in which persons of moderate means can indulge themselves

in a restaurant dinner at small cost. But while the *table d'hôte* dinner is incomparably cheaper than any other kind, in that it gives more variety of food for less money, one wearies after a while of *table d'hôte* fare and desires an opportunity to exercise the faculty of choice. Those who are knowing in such things can find several restaurants where it is possible to order a savory meal without going to heavy expense. Of course such a meal will not be the orthodox dinner with soup, fish, *entrée*, roast, salad, sweet, and coffee. If it is to be brought within a modest sum, it can consist of only a few articles. But the provision of each of these will be so liberal that one portion may be divided between two, and a greater variety thus secured than could be hoped for at the same price by the diner ordering for himself alone. At certain of these restaurants, the cookery is admirable and the prices far less than those paid for no better food in more fashionable surroundings.

The gastronomic explorer will find his task worth his while if he is not depressed by an occasional disappointment. Right here in New York there are many little hotels and even *pensions* for foreign folk where there is good cookery to be had, did one but know how to find the places.

There are probably even more of the jolly little outdoor places than one dreams of. It is very well for the rich and great of earth to dine on the terrace at Sherry's or the Savoy or the Martin, or even to make a truce with conventions and go to the Casino in Central Park, or to seek their enjoyment farther afield and take their festive repasts at the Clermont. But the moderately poor have joys of their own and probably have as much fun over their simple dinner in the back yard—and this, too, is dignified by being called a terrace—as if they had spent ten times as much for a meal on upper Fifth Avenue.

CHAPTER XVII

CITY AMUSEMENTS THAT COST NOTHING

NEW YORK is a place where you can get a great deal for a very little. That is not the common impression. Many persons seem to think that it is necessary to pay and pay high for anything really desirable. The initiated know better and secure their pleasures at a small cost or free of charge.

That is, free of pecuniary charge. Thought and search must be given to achieve some of them and there are a number for which one must make a small money outlay. But this is so trifling that one does not err in putting down the enjoyments to which it leads among those that cost nothing.

There is something a bit unusual and distinguished about accomplishing one's dissipations at a low price. Any one with money, even if he lacks brains or appreciation, can walk into the box-office of a theatre or the opera house and buy

the best seat on the diagram. What does he know of real enjoyment? His outing has cost him nothing beyond the trouble of putting his hand in his pocket. It was in the country where the pigs ran around ready roasted, crying "Come, eat me!" and all the eaters had to do was to open their mouths to be fed, that the people became *blasé* and faded out of existence through inertia. The fun that is found by seeking is worth twice as much as that which we have simply to choose to get.

Yet the search for the means of enjoyment is not so arduous as to weary one in advance. It may be found in the columns of the papers, daily and Sunday, it is posted on various bill-boards, it is proclaimed in advertisements and in the announcements of the municipality and from the pulpits of churches. One has only to look and listen.

Few of the persons who run down America as hopelessly commercial and with no real knowledge of art, have any idea of how much good art is at our very doors, waiting to be taken in and studied. Men and women go abroad and haunt picture galleries and deplore our lack of opportunity for study in these lines, who have lived in New York

for years and been to the Metropolitan Museum perhaps twice. They do not seem to know that there exists in that gallery an excellent and growing collection which they would consider worthy of praise if they found it in some foreign city. No one attempts to put it on the level with the National Gallery or the Louvre or the Munich Pinacotek or the Vienna Imperial Art Museum. But it is a good representative collection and additions are being constantly made to it,—additions of which the average New Yorker takes no heed unless his attention is especially called to them.

But this is not all of art in New York. There are several admirable private collections to which there are ways of obtaining admission. This must generally be done by the influence of some one who knows the owner. Such owners of fine works of art are sometimes called churlish because they do not throw open their collections for general inspection at stated seasons, at least. One of them was public-spirited enough to do so a few years ago. The visitors came in throngs to inspect the pictures. They also besought the servants in attendance to admit them to the private portions of the house, and one of the most

enterprising parties forced their way into the dining-room, where the master of the house sat at table with his family. The experience taught him his lesson. The galleries have remained closed to the public since that time.

Still, as I have said, personal influence may sometimes succeed in gaining one admission to the private collections. But without these one need not lack other art besides that supplied by our large museum and by the regular picture shows of the Academy, the American Artists, and other such bodies. All up and down Fifth Avenue and on many of the side streets are art shows that deserve respect and cost nothing to see. At one of these a short time ago was a noteworthy collection of French impressionist pictures. One had a fine exhibition of Raffaelli's work. Another has all the time specimens of the most remarkable American painters. This one makes a specialty of displaying the originals from which illustrations are made. Another one shows rare etchings from masters dead and alive. In nearly every one of them, uptown and down, may be found pictures well worth the seeing,—pictures that will keep one in touch with the art movement in this country and abroad.

Some of the libraries have their collections, permanent and temporary. There are certain pictures well worth seeing at the Lenox. Not long ago an interesting collection of Rossetti pictures was put on view there. If one keeps track of the art news in the daily papers there will be many an opportunity found for seeing good pictures. The Architectural League has its annual exhibition, to which there is no charge for admission. Shows of other lines of work are to be had for the seeking. There are many more that space forbids to mention.

When it comes to music, the chances for free enjoyment are less numerous, but they exist. There are the free public concerts in the various city squares. There are the open air concerts in Central Park all during the summer,—concerts at which there is vocal as well as instrumental music. There are the organ recitals given in the city churches all during the winter. These recitals are of well-chosen music and the men at the organ are masters in their art. For those who are fond of oratorio there are treats offered by several city churches that make a drawing card of their music and provide an oratorio a Sunday for those who will come to hear it.

When one goes to a slight expenditure there is no lack of music. For some time past we have had one good orchestra giving excellent concerts at low prices all summer, and sometimes there have been two or three. The restaurants and beer gardens uptown,— places, by the way, that are patronized by an eminently respectable set of people,— offer good music to their customers. The men and women who are fond of that sort of thing can easily imagine that they are in old Germany as they sit about their little tables in the palm-decorated rooms and drink from their steins and listen to the music. To some of these places there is a small charge for admission. At others it is sufficient to give an order and the music and other enjoyment is thrown in with that.

The opera is, of course, out of the reach of the people of small means who have proud spirits and must take the best, or at least the very good, or go without. But to those who are meek and lowly in spirit and strong in limb and sound in wind, there is always the top gallery of the Metropolitan Opera House. Those who go for the music rather than for the reputation of the singers who make it, will not disdain the Saturday night operas. On German soil they would

be quite content to go night after night and listen to no better rendering of the masterpieces, but here they scorn any singers but those who command the highest prices from the management, and feel that if they cannot have De Reszke or Melba or Calvé their time and money are thrown away.

All these forms of enjoyment may be put down as pleasure seeking, pure and simple. It must be recollected that there are many persons who long to improve their minds. For them a paternal city government has taken thought. The person who desires to hear lectures has only to study the bill-board of the Cooper Union to see what has been provided for the people. There are lectures on enough different subjects to insure every one hearing, sooner or later, some utterances on something in which he is interested. These lectures are not given by inconspicuous orators, whose names bear no weight with them. Some of the cleverest and most learned speakers in the country have been heard in the People's Lecture courses.

The lover of lectures can have all he wants. The city has them in the public-school buildings and all are free to come. The Young Men's Christian Association and the Young Women's

Christian Association both offer series during the winter. The big churches provide them and beg people to come. Ethical societies and societies for the promulgation of new religions and theories give them. There are illustrated lectures at the Art League to which no admission is charged. Up at the Metropolitan Museum there are art lectures on the same terms. There is no reason why one should not be swept through the season in a giddy whirl of free lectures if his tastes lead him that way. He has only to pick and choose to have lectures on any and every topic, delivered by experts in their own lines.

For further improvement, mingled with enjoyment, it is worth while to go to the Natural History Museum—a place identified in some persons' minds with Sunday afternoon penitential pilgrimages, when it was necessary to take the children somewhere and the Natural History Museum did as well as anywhere else. To many it will be a surprise to hear of the remarkable collections there. I was told once in London that the South Kensington Natural History Museum was one of the most interesting in existence because it shows so many stuffed animals in the habitats which were facsimiles of those in which they dwelt while

alive. At that time, I did not know that the Natural History Museum in my own city possessed the same feature. There, also, are Indian remains, Eskimo dwellings, costumes, weapons, and the like, with the figures of these people of the North reproduced and clothed in their characteristic dress. And besides this, and much, much more of interest,—enough to repay one for many visits,—is the finest collection of gems in the world.

It is impossible to go into particulars concerning all the city's storehouses of information and enjoyment. The animals at the Park have long been the joy of those who, aside from their interest in the brute and bird creation, delight in tracing resemblances between these specimens of the so-called lower animals, and their dearest friends and foes. Up at the Bronx Park, there is an even finer opportunity for the exercise of this profitable pastime. The collection there is growing and if the future New Yorker is not familiar with the animal kingdom, it will not be the fault of his city government. For his benefit, it has also provided the Aquarium and stocked it with all the fishes that swim in the sea, labelled, that he may be instructed as well as amused.

There are outdoor enjoyments a-plenty for New Yorkers when the warm weather comes. Perhaps he thinks he knows Central Park, but he is an exception if he is really familiar with it. The more frequented walks and drives he may know, with every one else. Probably he has taken his turn there at inspecting the afternoon parade of New York's money-makers and money-spenders. But he does not know the Park until he has turned away from these vain, deluding joys, and sought the more secluded portions which lie in the Ramble and beyond. He may stroll about these quieter parts of the Park for many a day without exhausting their possibilities. When he tires of these he may make the acquaintance of the Riverside Park. Best of all are the Bronx and Pelham Bay Parks. Not the portions that every one knows,—the portions that have in times happily past been desecrated by merry-go-rounds and similar abominations,—but the remoter regions, that seem not like a park but like plain, old-fashioned outdoors. Here, on pine needles or under the spreading boughs of oaks and chestnuts, may one loaf and forget that the city and its noise is not a thousand miles away.

CHAPTER XVIII

LITTLE OUTINGS NEAR NEW YORK

EVERY summer arises some one who breaks forth in print with the praise of New York as a summer resort. The panegyrist may be sincere, or he may be desirous of turning in a certain amount of space work. In either case he is often unfortunate in having his laudation of the city appear shortly before the time when New York gives her unhappy denizens a specimen of what she can do when she gives her attention to furnishing tropical weather.

When, however, these writers or any others, undertake to write of New York as a centre for charming excursions for the day or the week-end, no one who knows the subject will wish to cavil. There are so many pleasant places for a little outing near New York that one might seek a fresh spot every Sunday through the season

without exhausting the sum of them. In the limits of a single chapter it is impossible to run over more than a comparatively small number, and any one who has explored the environs of the big city will have as many more at once suggested to his memory.

Among the joys of New York are her parks. Not the downtown breathing spaces of grass and trees with which the city is all too poorly provided, but the great park lands stretching away to the northwards. More and more people are learning to know and love these, but their delights are still unfamiliar to too many.

The Bronx is probably better known than any other of the parks on the outskirts. The presence of the Zoo and the other big collections there has done much to make it sought, and those who love it mourn that it is already losing its wildwood charm in parts and becoming combed and brushed and polished into the semblance of a city park. But Pelham Bay Park is as yet unspoiled. To this one goes by the Suburban—the continuation of the Third Avenue Elevated—and getting off at a little wayside station, may after a few moments' walk, plunge directly into lovely woods. Along through these it is possible to go for a mile

or so before reaching the Hunter's Island Inn. Opposite to that hostelry, where the good dinner and city prices, with the asphalt roads in front of the place, help one to remember civilization, is the roadway entering the grounds of the fine old mansion that has been bought by the city and is now used as a children's Fresh Air home of one of the New York Settlements. The ground slopes beautifully down from the house to the Sound, and there are lovely lights and shadows on the water and the little islands. An ideal place to rest and dream in a spring or fall afternoon, before the Fresh Air infants have come or after they have taken their departure.

Van Cortlandt Park is popularly known because of the golf links, that are always crowded. It has less retirement about its grounds than Pelham Bay Park, and yet even here there are grassy, shady nooks where one can eat one's lunch and stretch oneself on the grass with a book, tolerably sure of at least comparative solitude. Those who always want an object in their outings can do their duty by the old mansion-house with its interesting collection of colonial relics. But those who have visited it in June will remember with most enjoyment the line of locust trees bordering

the road up to the house and filling the air with their rich and delicate perfume.

Of Fort Lee and the country near it one hardly needs to tell the uptown New Yorker, while many of those who live well below the Harlem have crossed the river in the spring by the Fort Lee Ferry, in search of the early wild flowers. The place is likely to be almost too well filled at this time, like the Bronx. To the latter place, by the way, pilgrims still go in search of "Laguerre's," and although the old Frenchman who ran "The Hermitage" has gone over to the majority, it is still possible to dine out-of-doors in the midst of such thoroughly French surroundings that one may almost imagine oneself in one of the little *al fresco* restaurants so plentiful near Paris. But the trains of the New York Central thunder along the other side of the little river and the diner comes back to the United States with a rush.

Less well known than "The Hermitage" is the Woodmansee Inn in Westchester. Only recently has one been able to get to it by the Suburban and enjoy its delights. Now the trolley and the railroad together can bring one near it.

All these are very near New York. There are others only a little farther afield.

A charming excursion for a Sunday or for any other holiday, to those who are fond of walking, is that to the Pocantico Hills. These are up back of Tarrytown and may be reached by the Putnam Road, which is the continuation of the Ninth and Sixth Avenue Elevated roads. These hills might almost be dignified by the name of mountains, for they rise to very respectable heights and are beautiful and picturesque even to those who are familiar with more lofty peaks. Here one may roam about through a long morning, and after a luncheon and noon rest—it is necessary to take a lunch, as there is no good dining-place near—may make one's way towards the Hudson, explore Sleepy Hollow, and so on down to Tarrytown and by the New York Central home.

To Nyack, too, is a pleasant excursion. The trip up the Palisades is always attractive, and at Nyack there is a hostelry where one may dine well. There are still several old road-houses to be found in the neighborhood of New York where it is possible to get a good dinner when one is out for a day's pleasuring. A charming place of this type is at Bend View, on the Passaic River, not far from Belleville. New Jersey is rich in such places. There is a fine old resort at Hackensack,

where a good dinner is to be found, and although it is rather the way to poke fun at the sedate old Dutch town, it is worth a visit. If one goes farther away, there are places galore. Few persons know the beauties of northern New Jersey. It is a lovely rolling country, with hills that are sometimes mountains.

Greenwood Lake is tolerably well known, but there are other spots no less attractive. Oakland, Pompton, Franklin Lake, Echo Lake, and half a dozen other stations on the Greenwood Lake and the Susquehanna Roads are charming for a day or for a longer time. In nearly any of them it is possible to find a meal, but it is always safe to take a lunch along unless one has a pretty clear idea of the sort of country to be explored. In another direction, but still accessible, is Lake Hopatcong, and when one goes down on the Jersey shore there is no lack of resorts. But all these spots are more sophisticated and although one may have a quiet day at Navesink and on the shores of the Shrewsbury River, the coast line generally is pretty much given over to cottages and hotels. Little of that sort of thing prevails in the country parts of New Jersey.

Staten Island, too, has its possibilities. There

are pleasant places there where one can go for a day. Over towards Bergen Point, it is pretty, if flat. But it is when one goes down on Long Island that one appreciates almost as much as over in Jersey, the possibilities of excursions to be made in the vicinity of New York. To these places one may go either by boat or by rail and feel to the full how easy it is to get cheap salt air as well as cheap country air near New York City.

It is a pleasant sail down to Sea Cliff and it is very beautiful when one gets there. The high cliff rises above the sands far below, and the ravines that run down to it remind one of the "chines" in the Isle of Wight. Indeed, all that part of Long Island close about there bears more or less resemblance to the English island. Roslyn is another pretty place near there and the whole railway line is so strung with attractive looking stations that it is with difficulty the traveller keeps from getting off and forgetting the place for which he has bought his ticket.

All this, of course, is on the Long Island Railroad. There are other charming places along that line. It is a delightful experience to go to Jamaica, hire a carriage, and set forth to explore. By a pleasant drive through Flushing and along

winding roads—these, too, in June, bordered with locust trees heavy with bloom—may one come to a secluded little inn by the water where it is possible to get a good dinner at a low price and to sit on the verandah and sniff the salt air and be lazy to one's heart's content. There are several of these inns where a good shore dinner is served at reasonable rates.

"Garrison's" has a rather enviable reputation for its dinners. To get there one takes the Long Island Railway to a station called Bayside. From this it is about a mile's walk to Garrison's, along a charming shaded road that is almost enough in itself to make the trip a success, even if there were not a good dinner waiting for one at the end of the tramp. Willett's Point is near here and an army post and other interesting things. But the best part of it is the walk and the fresh air and the dinner.

As I have said, a great part of Long Island repays exploration. Port Jefferson has its features and Port Washington and half a dozen others. All about Little Neck Bay there are pleasant places for a day's outing. Jamaica Bay is rich in them. The quaint old town of Oyster Bay has attractions quite apart from those furnished by

the fact that it is the country home of President Roosevelt. It is a charming spot in which to spend one day or several.

So far the journeys have been chiefly by land, although one has in some cases the option of the boat to the 'longshore resorts. Those who are fond of sailing may easily find the chance to go out with a skipper for a day on the water. When two young people are united in a fondness for deep-sea fishing and immunity from seasickness, their pleasures are plain before them. One cannot take up a paper in the season without seeing advertisements of opportunities to go on fishing excursions, and, while many of these are not of a character to appeal to a woman, they yet serve as a guide to indicate where such joys may be found. Trifles like sore arms and hands and sunburned faces do not weigh in the scale for a moment against a day in an open sailboat with the possibility of even one bluefish to show for the day's harvest.

There are many cheap excursions to be made about New York by steamer. Coney Island is always with us, and there are worse places, if one can get away from the crowd and the noise and the hurly-burly and wander along the sands.

The breeze is strong and cool and one may either take one's lunch with one or have a fair meal at one of the hotels along the beach. Then one may have the sail around Staten Island and up to Glen Island,—if one inclines that way. Far Rockaway may be reached by boat, and so may Long Beach. At nearly all of these places those who incline to sea bathing may indulge themselves in that pastime.

The persons who are fond of sailing and yet have a well-founded objection to rough water may turn to the Hudson. This is not the pleasantest place in the world in very hot weather. But if the air is fresh there are few more agreeable inland water trips than up the North River. One may plan to go as far as one chooses by one of the day lines and return from any given point by train. There are beautiful spots all along the river to get off and pass the day.

One might go on indefinitely with a list of attractive localities for a day's outing and make a *résumé* that would read like a list of summer resorts. As I said in the early part of the chapter, this account aims merely to be a suggestion for the benefit of those who do not know New York's possibilities as a centre from which to

make trips into the country or to salt water. The cost of these excursions lies with the persons who make them and is tolerably easy to be reckoned beforehand. The price of the ticket may be ascertained and it is simple to make an estimate of the other charges of the outing. When the cost of the dinner at the inn to which one is going is a fixed quantity, the only added cost after the ticket will be carfare to and from the station. If the lunch is carried along, the price of the outing is, of course, diminished. There is no sense in making such excursions *en prince*. One is going for the fun and for the day in the fresh air,—not to eat a high-priced dinner at an expensive and fashionable hotel. There are many of the prettiest spots near New York where a round-trip ticket will not cost more than a dollar or so apiece, and the lunch that is packed at home will not raise the cost of the excursion by more than a dollar additional. This is not an extravagant outlay for a day's pleasuring,—and there are charming places to which one can go for less.

The couple who must spend their summer in New York will come through it a great deal better for the occasional days out-of-doors. They

will find these a wiser investment than roof gardens, and costing no more. At any railway or steamboat office can be procured a time-table or guide-book setting forth the special merits of every place along that especial company's line of transportation. With these the husband and wife may sit down and figure enough cheap excursions to fill every Sunday in the hot weather and leave a goodly number over to be worked off the next year.

CHAPTER XIX

WHAT TO DO WITHOUT

THE question what shall be given up or forborne comes in very early in the experience of every married couple. They are exceptional young people if they have not had the opportunity to deny themselves more or less before marriage. The man has the advantage over the woman in that he has had to learn to refuse for himself, while the burden of withholding indulgences from her has usually fallen upon her father and mother or other legal guardians. So it is rather a new thing, perhaps, when she has to plan her own disappointments.

Nevertheless, it is something she must learn to do, and the sooner the better. A few individual pleasures she may debar herself, but there are certain things upon which she and her husband must come to a thorough understanding, if they are to do without to the best advantage.

As in so many other respects, their past life will help to decide here. The line of renunciation runs in one direction for some persons, in a different way for others. Just as to some women it is a hardship to have to make their own gowns, while other women take it as a matter of course, so there are those to whom it seems a positive privation to be unable to hear the latest opera, the season's most famous singer. One man feels that he gives up little or nothing in dropping his club, another finds the inability to allow himself this expense one of the most unpleasant of self-denials.

In such matters, it goes without saying that the cost should have been counted in advance. The woman who cannot be happy without her Paris gowns or her opera box should not have become the wife of a poor man, while the man to whom horses and clubs are necessary should have weighed the pros and cons before binding matrimonial burdens upon his shoulders.

But take it for granted that the newly established pair are common-sense young persons who have known beforehand that they could not hope for the luxuries when married that they took as a matter of course when single. They were

prepared for a certain amount of renouncement. But they get more than they had looked for. The cost of going to housekeeping had been underestimated in the first place,—it always is!—or the expense of keeping up the establishment had mounted up more than they had fancied it would,—as it probably will. They therefore find themselves obliged to cut down upon what they consider perfectly legitimate expenditures and to deny themselves little joys that, if everything had gone as they had planned, would have been quite within their means.

Here it is they must face the fact that there are certain things they must do without. The sooner they resolve to take the matter philosophically, the better all around.

There are so many things one can do without! This sounds as if it might be the prelude to well-chosen remarks as to the reasonableness of the man's giving up smoking or something of that sort, or the woman denying herself the little daintinesses that make her good to look at. Nothing of the kind. There are some things it costs more to spare than to get, and what these shall be each one must decide for himself or herself. This dissertation is not intended to convey

any hard and fast rules, but merely to make a few suggestions that may be helpful.

In the first place, let the smoking be considered for a moment. It is undoubtedly an expense. Very possibly the man would be none the worse, perhaps even the better, physically, for giving it up. But because there are some men of such a high grade of virtue that this argument instantly converts them, shall there be no more cakes and ale? His two or three cigars daily may mean a comfort to the man that is beyond computation in mere dollars and cents. If his family had to suffer that he might enjoy this pleasure, he should put it aside. Unless this is the case, he has a right to his small indulgence and it is nobody's business but his own.

The woman's bill for caramels,—or whatever her favorite sweet may be,—probably does not equal the sum of her husband's tobacco, and she doubtless takes her indulgence in another direction. If it is in the line of the fluffinesses and frills already referred to, she makes a mistake if she cuts herself off from them entirely. She could do without them. There is no doubt of that. But so long as their presence renders her more attractive in her husband's eyes and

heightens his pride and happiness in her, she shows common-sense when she puts them into the list of necessities.

In such cases the doing without resolves itself rather into a matter of selection than of rejection. The husband takes it as a matter of course, if he is the right sort, that he shall not smoke the most expensive cigars when he knows that the family finances are straightened. It is on the cards that he may resort to a pipe and be none the worse for it. His wife may practice her corresponding economies. She need not go to the most expensive shops for her *chiffons*, nor need she choose the highest-priced she sees. She may study instead how to make the less costly take the place of the others and may keep on the lookout for combinations that are bargains.

These same bargains are a proverbial stumbling stone and rock of offence to a woman. Perhaps a man yields at times to the fascination of bargains, but if he does, it is kept out of the comic papers. Even the sensible woman, to whom the ordinary bargain-counter presents no attractions, has her weak spots and finds it hard to pass by on the other side when she sees something she does not need now, but may need later on. Such

things it is sometimes a veritable economy to purchase, but this thought leads many a woman into pitfalls. Unless she actually feels the want of the thing offered, she does well to turn away when she sees temptation awaiting her at a time when the money supply is low. "Can I do without it?" let her ask herself and answer the query conscientiously. In eight cases out of ten the reply will be in the affirmative.

All a woman's trials do not lurk within the precincts of a dry-goods shop or in a milliner's window. The young housekeeper is sorely tempted by articles for her home. Here it is sometimes harder to do without than anywhere else. And yet, it will generally prove that the things she wants worst to buy are not those that are useful, but that are ornamental. She does not need them, actually,—but they would make the house look so pretty! Then is the time for her to ejaculate, "Get thee behind me!" The temptation is approaching her at her weakest point.

There are other things she finds it hard to do without. One of these is the happiness of entertaining as she would like to do. If she has lived in a family where a good and possibly an expensive table was the rule, she does not relish

coming down to omitting an *entrée* from the bill of fare of her little dinner and she hates to offer a cheap dessert and to forego game. These are the things she must school herself to do without. She must learn—one of the hardest things of all —that she cannot afford to have fresh flowers in her room all the time. She must resort to potted plants and ferneries and the like.

Her self-denials in the line of dress have already been touched upon in "The Problem of Clothes." Here she can at least make something take the place of something else and it is perhaps easier to do this in dress than to make a free lecture compensate for the inability to go to the theatre. But if young people will look at it in the philosophical light, there are perhaps more compensations along every line than one would think at the first glance. If the wife and husband go out little at night, they are probably the less tired the next day. If there are more quiet evenings together there is more reading or more music, or whatever else is the chosen form of home amusement. It all amounts to pretty much the same thing in the long run and it is amazing how soon any habit of life establishes itself and is taken as a matter of course.

It would be impossible to find a family in which there were not extravagances of some order or other. In one household I know it takes the form of hospitality. They never go to the theatre; the outings they allow themselves in summer are of the cheapest character. But there is always a welcome for the chance guest at whatever meal he happens to strike upon, and there is not a week when there is not a little dinner or a Sunday night supper or a late-at-night lunch to the friends who have been spending the evening. In another family, there is little entertaining, but the latest magazines and the newest books are always on the table. The family go shabby, so far as their clothes are concerned, but their book bills would pay many an account of the tailor and the dressmaker.

When one cannot have everything,—and there are very few who can,—the choice of the indulgence should be made and then the decision fixed as to what will be gone without in order to atone for the extravagance. It is a blessed dispensation when husband and wife agree upon what is to be renounced and what is to be preserved. A difference makes for much discomfort and the whole question should be very thoroughly and

dispassionately discussed before deciding upon *il gran rifiute.*

As I said before, each household must judge for itself. The only general suggestion that can be offered is a plea for consistency. Cheap underwear and silk petticoats go together no better than an ingrain carpet and truffles for dinner. When the housekeeper buys something for herself or for her house, it should be in harmony with what is already in store, and when she or her husband indulges in an extravagance it should not be of a kind that will bring into too glaring relief the rigid economies they have to practise in other respects.

One thing more should be said about these extravagances. They should be well enough worth while to justify the perpetrators thereof in going without the luxury of laying aside a little something in view of illness, accident, or other casualty. Sometimes it seems more plague than profit to bother about savings, but that is usually the view taken by the inexperienced and improvident. The bitterest economy is that one must practise when a lack of funds obliges one to deny the outing to the sick one of the household, the delicacies that would tempt an invalid, the re-

laxations that would mean recuperation to the overtaxed. To make a provision for such contingencies as this it should not be hard to go without a good many minor enjoyments. Such denials seem sometimes too small to be worth counting, but they mount up in time and their sum total is worthy of consideration.

But in this list of economies let no small loverly attentions be included. The half dollar that a man saves by renouncing the custom of bringing the weekly handful of flowers or box of candy to his wife is as poor an investment as that she makes when she abstains from giving him the savory meat which his soul loveth because it costs two cents more a pound than a cheaper dish for which he cares nothing. These kindly thoughts, these little evidences of tender recollection make a better showing when they are added up than any savings bank account.

CHAPTER XX

CONFIDENTIAL WITH MADAME

AS woman to woman, it may be acknowledged that a man does not have very much of his own way in his own house.

Upon this statement there will be two kinds of comment. One will contradict my assertion and bring forth instances innumerable of men who have ruled their households with a rod of iron. The other commentators will inquire calmly, "Why should he? He has his way in his business. Let the wife have things as she wants them at home!"

Both of these assertions are true. There are domestic tyrants. But they are the exception rather than the rule. The house is peculiarly the wife's domain, but she should reign here as queen consort, not as absolute sovereign. She does not interfere in her husband's business, but neither does she put money into its support. The

man who pays the bills for running the house surely has—or should have—some rights in the establishment.

The fault into which many young housekeepers glide unconsciously is that of thinking the house of more importance than the man. They are so desirous to make the best use of the money given them for the maintenance of the home, to take the best care of the goods and chattels that have been bought with the man's money, that they let this desire render them careless of other considerations. One of these is that there are certain things a man would rather have than economy and a spotless house kept in apple-pie order. He would rather have a place where he could feel fully and freely at his ease. He would prefer to be at liberty to bring home a friend to a meal to having the housekeeping accounts brought down fifty cents lower in the course of the week. He would find it more of a comfort to be able to smoke where he pleased and stretch himself out on the cushions of the drawing-room divan when he felt like it than to see the furniture undisturbed and to know that the curtains were unsmoked.

All day long the man is at work in an office. He has his compensations,—be sure of that!—but

still he works hard. He is with people from morning until night. As the day draws to an end his thoughts turn to his home as to the haven where he will escape all the racket and bother that wait upon him here. When he comes home he wants a place where he can have peace.

The woman, too, has worked much, or perhaps all, of the day. Her toil has been of a different character. She has had things to bother her more than she has had people. Perhaps she does not appreciate the craving her husband feels to get away from every one. But she should at least recognize this desire in him and provide him an opportunity to indulge it.

When possible, a man should have a den. Advocates of a woman's rights and privileges demand why she should not have one, too. In ordinary circumstances, she needs it less. Unless she has children who climb over her at all hours of the day and night, she can usually achieve a certain amount of solitude when she wants it. When her husband comes home there is no place where he can shut himself away from the world while he lets his strained nerves relax after the labors of the day.

In the ideal house, where there is a room or

two to spare, the man has a den. Not a den out of a fashion paper, arranged by the wife in accordance with what she thinks a man's den should be, but a city of refuge for him from the frills and fallals that to his mind cumber the other rooms of the house. The den that he loves has in it nothing that can be hurt by smoke. It has a lounge where he can nap and a big chair where he can sit and read his paper. It has a good strong light, with no fancy shades, and ash receivers plenty and a carpet on the floor that nothing can hurt. There the man can forget the world, and thence he can emerge refreshed after his period of much-needed repose.

In a flat it is next to impossible to achieve this. Everything opens into everything else, and the inhabitants, like the members of the early Church, have everything in common. When the only apartment that is not pre-empted as a bedroom—it is usually the one opening from the drawing-room, and dignified by the name of a library—has no doors between it and the room adjoining, it is not easy to manage even a semblance of privacy for the man of the house. When it is possible, with the aid of curtains and by planning, to keep that part of the dwelling

unvisited when its nominal owner is taking his rest, let it be done.

I can hear the man aforesaid entering into vehement protest against such consideration. He is not a baby or a sick woman, he will say, to have his nerves humored.

That would be a very tactless wife who would force this view of the matter upon him. It is not necessary for her to announce to him that she is coddling him. All she has to do is to recognize the fact that even a man gets tired after a hard day, and manage that he may have a little quiet either when he comes home or while he reads his paper after dinner.

Sometimes even this is not possible in a flat. The one room that serves for the gathering-place of the family is all that is available for the man's smoking and loafing room.

In that case the woman should make up her mind that she will let the husband smoke where he pleases. The smoke will not hurt the curtains, although she may think so. The cushions will not be permanently injured thereby. The rugs and bric-a-brac will be none the worse for it and the general well-being of the household will be much increased.

When a man comes home tired he should have some place to throw himself down for a nap. I know of households where the bed in which he sleeps at night is too much dressed up to be disturbed in the daytime. The master of the house may catch a nap in his armchair, perhaps, but he cannot lie down on his bed until the shams and spread and day pillows have been taken off.

Such things are more or less of an abomination, even under the most favorable circumstances. When they stand in the way of necessary rest they should be abolished. No desire to make a good appearance has any importance compared with that of having a place where a tired man or woman can take a little rest without going to the bother of removing the ornamental and useless furniture of a bed. That sort of thing may be admirable when one is preparing a room for the inspection of visitors, but there is neither rhyme nor reason in it when a couch is in a room that is in constant use.

The woman who meets her husband with a smile has been made the occasion for smiles of another sort. None the less, she is a very agreeable person and one worthy of all praise. She is certainly far pleasanter to live with than the

woman who meets her husband with an account of the things that have gone wrong during the day. Some young wives, in their desire to share everything in the new life, observe no decent reticence with regard to little domestic annoyances. The husbands,—good fellows!—take it with an indulgence that should win them a halo. In nine cases out of ten they accord a generous sympathy, and shoulder their share of the home burdens in addition to the business cares they have been carrying all day. It is a pity that some women cannot show similar unselfishness and restrain themselves in their outpourings of *contretemps*. If the home is to be a place of rest to the man who pays for it he should not be met on its threshold with a catalogue of catastrophes or of petty vexations.

One of the great mistakes made by young women commencing married life is that of considering it from the point of view of their own comfort and pleasure. They are busy thinking about what home means to them and while they expect to make it happy for their husbands, they do not reflect enough upon all it ought to mean to the man of the firm. Women have a well-deserved reputation for unselfishness, and their lack of

consideration in this respect is due to failure to put themselves in the place of the men. The women know what would please them in their own houses and jump to the conclusion that the same state of affairs would imply happiness to a man. But a man is not raised to a pinnacle of bliss by having the house speckless or by knowing that the new curtains or other draperies or the rugs or cushions are positively the last cry of fashion. He does not care, except as it makes his wife happy, for half of the fripperies that she reckons as essential. His is a kindly nature and he wants to see her comfortable. So he feigns a deep interest in recent fads and half the time makes her believe he is as proud of it all as she is, while in truth he would seek only for the general effect and for particular comfort.

A woman should bear in mind that a man gets very little out of his home in comparison with what she finds in it. He leaves it early in the morning. He comes into it late in the afternoon or early in the evening. He is at home on Sundays and the rare holidays. While she has everything as she pleases, within necessary limitations, every day and all day long. It is little enough to ask that he should have things

as he wants them when he is in the house, and that she should study to make it seem to him the most sweet and restful spot in the whole world.

All the ways that have been spoken of,—such as giving him the freedom of the establishment for loafing or for smoking and sparing him the recital of perplexities of the household, do their share in bringing the home to what he calls perfection, but there are other things besides. The wife should never slip into the habit of carelessness about her personal appearance.

One woman of my acquaintance has been the victim of bad health for years past. Often her days are full of pain and weariness. But always, if she is able to get to her feet, she is at the breakfast table and always neatly and becomingly dressed. Early in her invalidism she recognized the tendency a half-sick woman has of slipping into slovenly ways. Her dress is as trim when she sits down to breakfast with only her husband as though a dozen strangers were present and when she comes down to their *tête-à-tête* dinner she is as daintily arrayed as for a party of guests. Perhaps this has something to do with the fact that her husband is as much in love with her now as when they were married, although they

have just celebrated their crystal wedding anniversary.

Another mark of consideration a woman can show her husband is to abstain from nagging. This is a hard lesson for a woman. Many of those who seem to be constitutional naggers have drifted into the habit from a real pride in their husbands and a longing to keep them up to the mark. A woman who is proud of her lord and master cannot bear to see him fall short of her ideal, whether it is in a question of morals or a point of manners. It may be owned that sometimes there is danger of her laying more stress upon the latter than upon the former. She feels that he is the best judge of what is right and wrong for himself, but she knows that she is the best judge of how he shall behave. As a consequence she keeps her eyes open for little careless habits that he may slide into and rules him up sharply about them.

Every woman is in a measure responsible for her husband. He needs to have her remind him once in a while of some negligence or thoughtlessness. Men are less imitative than women and are prone to overlook this or that trifling convention, to fall into this or that trick of speech or

conduct. If the wife corrects these gently and tactfully, he is not wounded or irritated unless he is a rather unreasonable sort of fellow. But the kindliest man resents being told of his defects when he is tired or when other persons are present. He does not wish to have the reprimand "rubbed in." Such "rubbing in" he calls nagging,—and with reason.

It is a common saying that all men have to be managed,—which means that they should be treated with tact and tenderness. Sometimes these qualities require that a man's defects should be passed over. They may be so much a part of himself that it is like drawing teeth to get them out of his nature. It is not essential to the man's temporal or eternal salvation that they should be plucked out and cast from him. He might possibly suit his wife better without these flaws,—but she should bear in mind that some of her shortcomings probably try her husband quite as much as his little errors do her. Recollecting this, let her make it her glory to pass over such transgressions. The man's comfort is worth too much to be imperilled by constant criticism.

A very sane and sensible woman was talking of this matter one day to a circle of younger matrons.

"You talk about 'keeping your husbands up to things,'" she said. "I used to talk in that way once. But my husband is no longer a young man and it is not so easy as it was to break him of the little habits he slips into. For a long while I tried to do this and would speak to him about them again and again. But I saw it worried him and made him unhappy. And after thinking about it, I concluded I would have to choose between letting him feel that when he came home it was to a refuge from bother and annoyance, or nagging at him to keep him up to my standard. So I decided that his comfort was worth more than my whim. When it is only some little thing about him that bothers me I let it alone."

This is a lesson most women have to learn. In the beginning of their home life they must solve what is essential and what is not and govern themselves accordingly. The homes in which there is least nagging will undoubtedly be the happiest.

Early in this chapter something was said about a man having the right to bring home a friend to dinner unannounced. For some unknown reason this is a privilege highly valued by the average

man and he likes to think he possesses it, no matter how rarely he exercises it. The simple joy he derives from this prerogative is too great for a woman to rob him of it lightly. Even if it upsets her calculations a little she should not show her husband that she is disturbed. It is by such gracious conduct that she endears herself to him and makes his conviction surer than before that he has the best home in the world.

After all, it is his house. He has a right to do in it as he pleases. His wife should make him feel her recognition of this fact. It heightens his sense of his own importance and never yet was there a man—or a woman—who was not more amiable when swelling with personal importance than when placed in a position of comparative insignificance.

In any home such consideration as I have outlined is desirable, but it is an absolute necessity for the dweller in flats. The free creatures who live in the country,—even if they must commute to do it,—or who own a whole house, have some place to which to fly when the domestic wind is in the east. In city tents, every one lives in every other person's pocket, so to speak. If peace is to be purchased it must be at the cost of self-abnega-

tion. A woman takes to this naturally and she should cultivate the talent. A man always has to give up enough, anyway—or thinks he has, which amounts to the same thing. In his home his wife should make it her study to keep him comfortable.

THE END

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